

# **India**

## **AGAINST THE STORM**

**Post Wheeler**

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INDIA AGAINST THE STORM



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*By*

POST WHEELER

BOOKS, INC.

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Distributed by

E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY, INC.  
NEW YORK 1944

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FIRST EDITION

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BY THE WILLIAM BYRD PRESS, INC.  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

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## ERRATA

Page 8, line 19 }  
 Page 36, line 14 } for "eighteenth century" read "eighth century."

## NOTE

Certain dates and facts mentioned in the book date from the time of writing, 1943, whereas the book was published in 1944.

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## INDIA AGAINST THE STORM



### ON MALABAR HILL



In Bombay the cool season of 1941 was beginning and the air, that in the summer had been like a hothouse, on the crest of the curving hogback of Malabar Hill where I sat was breezy and pleasant.

It was my last afternoon in that bustling city. After thirty years of diplomacy in ten foreign capitals, anchored to the other end of the Washington cable, to be footloose had been a gift beyond price. For it had held the promise of the Middle East—Arabia, Egypt, Iran, India—that I did not know. India loomed largest on the world's horizon, and I had come to it at the last with an eagerness that had not been disappointed. Nearly two years of it had left me keener than ever to understand it and to sound its problems.

On either side of the ridge the cobalt bay rippled and sparkled in the sunlight, and behind me stretched the mottled dusk of the banyan-treed driveway to Government House on the point, where my wife and I had been lunching with Sir Roger and Lady Lumley.

The India Office does its governors well, and the spacious mansion, looking out three ways on the water, with its gay awnings and flower beds, is handsome and imposing. The aloof and pompous type of provincial governor that strutted into fiction with Kipling may exist in India, but it cannot be proven by me. The prevailing type nowadays is the younger-statesman sort, who have dignity when dignity is called for but who can relax with a pipe in the study or a dog on the lawn, and with friendly talk for the traveler who wants to know India from all its sides.

Sir Roger is the youngest of these whom I have been fortunate enough to know. Behind the Guards' gold-frogged uni-

forms and tasseled turbans, and the parade that is inseparable from an Oriental setting, I had found him the eternal kindly Englishman in authority, anything but offish, and anxious above all else that in the present situation Great Britain should not be misunderstood.

Below on the slope of the hill, in their park just beneath the Hanging Gardens, gray against the beryl, sat the squat round Towers of Silence, like miniature Colosseums, wherein the Parsee dead, high and humble, rich and poor, were exposed. Above them the waiting vultures planed and wheeled over the sprawling evergreens, or hung aloft, black dots in the burning blue.

After luncheon, strolling on the smooth-clipped lawn, with Sir Roger's glossy Irish setters racing about us, one of his A.D.C.'s had told us the macabre tale of the *al fresco* tea, where a guest had asked for a lady-finger and one had dropped obligingly on her plate from the sky.

It is Bombay's hoariest jest, arriving probably with the first installment of the Parsee fugitives from Persia in the eighteenth century.

During the past year and a half I had shuttled back and forth, up and down, crisscrossing the country many times. Laboring motors had coughed me through its northern Afghan passes with their jingling caravans. The train—with ice blocks pyramided in the tank in the center of the carriage and electric fans playing on them—had thumped and clanked me across the flat-breasted, featureless plains in the rainless season.

I had stayed in British India's chief cities, with their temples and cantonments, their mosques and bazaars. I had visited the Native States, with their gorgeous capitals and palaces like wedding cakes.

I had seen India's village life, in sections where the railroad does not reach, nor even the main highways. I had camped in the jungle, in the tiger and elephant country, where hunters and state foresters were the only white-face travelers the dwellers saw in a year's round, and travel was by elephant or shank's mare.

Anúp, my "bearer," the native servant who had acquired me in Calcutta on my arrival in India, who bought my train tickets, cleaned my sun helmet, polished my saddle, took care of my laundry and shooed off the dirtiest and most persistent beggars—who called me "Cherisher of the Poor" and told the hotel servants I had shot over a thousand tigers in the jungles of America, and who I felt would weep audibly and embarrassingly at the ship when I left—a little way off was watching a snake charmer playing his flute for a handful of children, with his cold-eyed cobra swaying above its rush basket and a tiny green *krait* snake coiled about his neck.

Sitting on Malabar Hill in the clean sunlight, I knew that however much I had still to learn of India, it would never again seem as mysterious a land to me.

My first discovery had been an unexpected one. I had been wrong in fancying that the average British resident in India—who is not an official, a teacher or a missionary—would know India as I had found the British to know European countries in which they lived. Perhaps the gulf between Occident and Orient is too deep. It takes more than a command of colloquial Hindustani to get far beneath the Westernized veneer of the modern intelligentsia, and only a superficial knowledge of the Indian mind is to be acquired from one's English-speaking, golf-and-tennis-playing Indian acquaintances. The average British resident seldom entered Indian houses, unless, it might be, to attend the tea given by the Indian movie star so popular at the moment in Bombay and Calcutta. He would never be seen in a native restaurant. He could not read the vernacular news sheets. He saw only the English-language, British-edited papers.

In a couple of hours I would be drinking gimlets (a beverage of the gin persuasion, a kind of horse's-neck junior, and a common tippie from one end of India to the other) at the Taj Mahal Hotel with a half dozen men who had lived in India twenty years and in all probability knew little more of the country than Bombay, Calcutta and New Delhi, with a month's annual leave at Darjeeling. The India of the towns and the villages, the vast swarming sea of population that laps the edges of the cities—

millions of human beings, toiling and incoherent, chained by superstition and caste in a bondage for which the subtle and profound philosophy devised by their dead sages offers no compensation, for the most part sunk in a poverty too benumbing to bear description—that India they would never know.

The first time I visited a low-class Indian village I wished devoutly that I had eaten no breakfast. It was within forty miles of Calcutta, but off the main highway. It consisted of some score of families inbred from a common ancestor, who naturally was their neighborhood deity. The filth was horrible. In a city's worst slum there are always the flagstones, noisome as they are, underfoot. This village was set in black mud and green slime, and the latrines were the gutters. I never saw a more wretched huddle of human beings even in Burma. I visited it with a missionary who has forsaken her comfortable mission compound to live there five days in the week. She has contrived a tiny school and chapel, even a playground for the children and a cow to furnish milk for the babies. I shall never forget the waxen pallor of her face and her cheerfulness.

This bizarre, romantic, starving, opulent, beautiful, loathsome land! Wherever I turned I had met the wan specter of poverty, staring at me in stony silence.

Poverty and its sister oppressor, Caste, Hinduism's monstrous despot of the centuries: the pair belonged together, for they were the two great sicknesses of India. The Moslems had no caste, nor the lesser communities of the Sikhs and the Parsees. It belonged to Hinduism alone.

Its grappling strangle-hold held even the poor devils of Untouchables. It was caste that had made them what they were, lower than the pariah dogs. Till the British came it had been no crime for a Brahman to kill an Untouchable. They were beneath the law. All the humanity that had ever been shown them—all the rights they had before men—had come from the British, not from their own race.

My friend Ambedkar, their celebrated leader, with whom I had dined the night before, was the holder of doctorates from the

University of London and our own Columbia. But he could not live in his home village except in an out-caste lane in a shabby suburb, nor drink from the common well. The Brahman priest would not cross his doorstep if he were dying, nor would the barber shave him.

He had wrenched away from Hinduism. He had become a Sikh. But the millions upon millions of Untouchables remained in the fold. They hugged the chains that caste had welded on them.

Hinduism, grim and unyielding, did not change. The Westernization was only the patina: the ware it glazed was Hindu still. Newspaper, railroad, telegraph, cinema, radio, airplane—and mingling with them the “holy man,” naked, encrusted in dirt, his forehead marked with the signs of his uncouth gods, and the placid sacred cow successfully disputing the way of taxi and pedestrian. Under the blare of the bus and the jangle of the trolley one caught the monotonous *don-a dón-dón-dón—don-a dón-dón-dón*, like a muffled jungle tom-tom, from some hidden temple of strange and repellant rites.

At Benares, Hinduism’s holy of holies, at the greatest of India’s native universities, I had spent a day watching its young students of engineering not only assembling intricate electric motors but making their own machine-tools to make the parts, and the same evening at the burning-ghats on the river, with the flames of the pyres crimsoning the current, I had seen the eldest son of an Oxford graduate piously break the skull of his father’s blazing corpse with a pole, before embers and ashes were thrown into the sacred Ganges—to the obscene crocodiles lurking in the shallows downstream.

At Calcutta’s Temple of Kali, the Black One, the Delighter in Blood, I had stood on pavements reeking with the gore of goats which had just had their throats cut, and seen the silken-sari’d women dipping their kerchiefs in the crimson puddles and kissing the sacrificial stone. And a few blocks away the movies were doing their roaring business.

Bombay, with its Victorian architectural horrors cheek by jowl with spanking new futuristic apartment houses, its gor-

geous sea front that should someday rival Rio's Copacabana Beach, its smoke-belching mill suburbs and swarming native life of the bazaar, had begun to be a real city only in the middle of the last century and had pre-empted the title of India's "Gateway" only in 1911, when the King-Emperor and his Queen came. The majestic archway on the wide stretch of the Apollo Bunder on the edge of the bay was built to welcome them. Since then all viceroys enter and leave India through that imposing portal.

But modern as it was, like all Indian cities it was old, old, old, with the ancient faiths and practices at variance with those of the West which a stranger nation had brought. They burned now, after a hundred and fifty years, with hatred of India's overlords, the English.

The country was a hotbed of hatred and Bombay a clearing-house for rumors, circulated by the Nationalists. No story was too ridiculous to be believed in the bazaars. Sir Henry Howard, the famous eye surgeon, had told me the latest that morning: the Nazis held the whole north of England, the British were fighting behind barricades in the London streets, and the King and Queen were in hiding at Barrackpore, sixteen miles out from Calcutta! There was a new rumor every day, equally absurd. They did not help the situation.

The city had been the focus of anti-British feeling ever since the so-called All-India National Congress, that enormous heterogeneous political machine with the deceptive name, had made it its spiritual capital. It was the billfold of the Congress, or rather of its "Working Committee," the select inner group which controls its policies and activities, with Gandhi, the strange little Mahatma of Wardha, who for twenty years had been setting the Indian Government and conservative India by the ears, behind the scenes pulling the strings.

Here on the slopes of Malabar Hill were the mansions of the Indian nabobs, the rich mill owners and plantationers, whose money had backed Gandhi's campaigns in his long-drawn-out war of "Civil Disobedience" with the Indian Government. Here



in Bombay he had inaugurated his burning of foreign goods at public bonfires, when his "Volunteers" stormed the shops, and fortunes in precious weaves went up in smoke, in those incredible bursts of mass hysteria that started him in his career as the Congress dictator and gave him his sweet press in America. The first furious riots and set-to's with the police had been in Bombay's streets and squares.

I had found the development of the Congress, from its small and rather naïve beginning, a fascinating thing to study.

There was no precedent for such a body in the world. It was loosely organized, without legislative powers, with no more authority than a people's mass meeting. I could become a member with a payment of something like eight cents and no questions asked, except "Do you want to oust the British?" That had been the one harp string of the early Extremists. They had kept twanging away on it till at last the sound had drowned out the whole orchestra. Popular education, the problems of the villages, child-marriage, all issues that could not be used as clubs to beat the British with, had gone on the shelf. It had been a combination of boring from within and a never-resting barrage of propaganda without. The end had been the surrender of the Moderates and the seizure of the Congress machine by the Mahatma.

Since then the registered membership of the Congress had become colossal and its influence great. I had doubted how great till the recent elections, when its candidates had won more than seven hundred seats in the provincial Legislatures out of the nearly sixteen hundred.

It had been an object lesson in the power of organized publicity. Gandhi had built up a superb machine for literate India, its cities and larger towns. Every newspaper in the country, English and vernacular, gave great space to the Congress' operations. His own publication, the *Harijan*, was printed in a dozen editions and nine languages.

But the villages were another thing. The Nationalist speakers in America—there had been of late years an astonishing number

of them, which was presumably where some of the money in the billfold went—declared the voice of the Congress was heard and heeded in India's remotest hamlets, and that Gandhi's picture was "on the thatched wall of every hut in India." Krishnalal Shridharani, who winged this brave flight of fancy in *My India, My America*, evidently had not encountered certain villages I had visited, in one of which the head man thought Gandhi was the family name of the Viceroy and that the Congress was a Moslem convention.

In my own experience the village masses knew as little of politics and what the Congress stood for as they knew of hygiene. Gandhi had told the London Round Table ten years ago that Congress found work for fifty thousand women in two thousand villages. He meant his spinning wheel. But there were about seven hundred thousand villages! Seven out of every ten inhabitants of India lived in them, and many thousands of them were sun-baked monsoon-soaked clots of wretchedness, where a handful of millet was a meal, where the local tax collector and the Brahman priest were the rulers, where the government meant only the police, and a newspaper was a white paper covered with black hen-tracks.

I had not seen any spinning wheels in the villages I visited.

Yet the Congress might have been—as its founders had so clearly intended—a great power to carry political education to the villages. As it was, the Nationalists, once they gained control, had used it wholly for inflammatory and destructive ends. The métier of its scouts and "Volunteers" was haranguing in the bazaars.

Down under Malabar Hill were no mansions or palaces. It was the bazaar section, a rabbit warren of filth and disease, of squalid lanes and unkempt tenements. And an Indian tenement must be seen to be believed. There the mill workers had their burrows.

I had been in the mills. The conditions in some of them were dreadful enough. Yet fifty years ago the living conditions of the steel workers of Pittsburgh were as bad. I had seen unhappy

sights in Indian-owned mills, and I had been in some that were models of all they should be. The white-haired Maharaja of Kapurthala, whom you may have seen strolling down Park Avenue and taken for a dignified Spaniard, has three of the biggest sugar mills in the world, and they are show places. And I had seen some British-owned mills in Calcutta of which the less said the better.

But was there ever a sadder commentary on the progress of humanitarianism in our own time than Lloyd George's invective against the mill owners of Manchester? In the days of Boss Tweed and Crocker's Tammany Hall, New York's slums would not bear examination. The slums of the Indian cities would go in time. It would be by the slow process of enlightenment, as in the cities of the West, as the Petticoat Lane of London's Whitechapel and New York's Five Points and Hell's Kitchen went, happily, long ago.

Meanwhile the Bombay bazaar district was being useful to the Nationalists. From its packed, sweltering masses they drew the brawlers for their campaigns. I had seen the intelligentsia scouts at their tub-thumping: India was great and learned, happy and prosperous (they told the listening throngs) before the British came! Its philosophy was the most profound, its literature the wonder and despair of modern scholars. Its palaces were more splendid than any Europe had. It was the art and the loving labor of Old India that had given the world its most perfect monument, the immortal Taj Mahal. India had been conquered before, but only Great Britain had despoiled and enslaved the Indians.

I had heard even Jawaharlal Nehru making this mockery of history!

For the low standard of living modern India struggled with antedated all record. The British came only yesterday. Long before the advent of the first Mogul conqueror, thirteen hundred years ago, the Hindu was the slave of the landlord and the money shark.

And what Indian does not know that to frame the flawless

and its Constitution, had been bad enough. But the Great War had made the situation infinitely worse. The precipitation of India into the conflict had brought all the smoldering enmity to a head. Gandhi's Congress had passed its defiant resolution against aid to the empire. A new era of Civil Disobedience was in the offing. For its very life Great Britain could not yield the last step the Congress demanded. India was teetering on the brink of the volcano.

Ever since Japan had joined the Axis Powers the ghostly monitor that has always lurked in my subconscious background had been hinting that it would be wise to pull out for America while the pulling was still good. But the fascination was growing, and I knew it would be too much for me. I would stay till the last possible moment. There was the problem of transportation. But it was worth the risk.

Meanwhile I could take account of stock. I could go over my notes and diaries and see what certainties had come to me out of the hurly-burly. The story of India as I saw it was there—the misty beginnings, the terrors and turmoils of the centuries of invasion, the impact of the West, the birth of the Congress, the strange phenomenon of the man Gandhi, and the easy descent into the Avernus of discord and confusion and misdirection that had landed India now on the verge of the abyss.

It was an intriguing and dramatic story. It needed telling. It was not difficult to guess what the closing chapter would be. There could be only one outcome. Whatever part India was to play, Great Britain must win the war.

The Congress' tactics had encouraged all forces of disruption. The Moderates were warped and split into leaky factions: among them all was no leader with force and personality enough to knit them into an effective opposition. Jinnah of the Moslem League had come all out for *Pakistan*, which meant a separate sovereign Moslem State in northern India, a sinister threat to Indian unity and to the ultimate rule of the Hindu majority. It had set the Hindus' teeth on edge. But their staid *Mahasabha* Party seemed to have broken into futile remnants. Political

India was confusion worse confounded, a bedlam of conflicting interests, with rebellion at the helm.

While the issues of the war were growing daily more momentous, while England fought off the Nazi air wolves with one hand and strove to strengthen her frayed lines of empire with the other, the younger Nationalist lot, with Nehru at their head, were shouting down the accents of reason and caution. The only thing to be heard above the uproar was the voice of Jinnah, vociferating at regular intervals, "Nothing shall be done without our assent!"

And back of it all—back of the crackpot young politicians with bitterness in their souls, the baiters of the street and debaters of the Assembly—at a small mud-walled village in central India, in a thatched hut, was squatting a queer little old man in a loincloth and pebble spectacles, a wizened and tooth-lacking gnome of a creature with the aura of a popular sainthood about him, singing a charm-song of love for all men, and warning the Congress to keep its powder dry.

And the Viceroy was sitting at New Delhi, with his ear cocked toward that distant village, as President Roosevelt might sit at Krum Elbow listening to Father Divine's flock across the river chanting, "Peace—it's wonderful!" Only to the Viceroy it wasn't peace, and it wasn't wonderful either, being just what experience must have led him to expect.

Thanks to the little Mahatma, India had become the number-one problem child of the democracies of the world, and what was to be done about it?

That question was still haunting me long after Malabar Hill had faded from my vision—when I was on a wretched, chattering, bilge-smelling little British-Chinese boat (and lucky to be there), laden with troops for Singapore and enough ammunition to blow us all to Kingdom Come, zigzagging across the Indian Ocean under dismal blackout to dodge three Nazi raiders, hoping to be past Hong Kong before the Japanese made it, and wondering whether the fish would get my observations after all.

## Chapter One

### BEFORE HISTORY BEGINS

MY sharpest six-year-old memory is Dikk. My favorite aunt, who knew India better than I ever shall, brought him, a sun-ebonied youngster of my own age, to America, where he became my playmate. He was of a family of some importance in one of the small raja estates in the north, and it had been thought well for him to learn something of Western life while he was still young and plastic.

Dikk and I romped and played together in the old New York house for a round year, and from him I learned Hindustani. Some bits of women's wailing *zenana* songs he taught me still sing themselves in the back of my mind, tangled with nursery snatches :

*Humpty Dumpty baitha tha chut.*  
*Humpty Dumpty girega phat.*  
*Sab Raja ka admee, aur Ranee ki gora.*  
*Humpty Dumpty kabhi na jora.*

He was full of thrilling stories of tigers and elephants and rubies and ruins and cobras and crocodiles, and insisted that India was bigger even than California, where my cousins lived, which of course I knew was impossible.

In my schoolboy years my grandfather—who literally to the day of his death ate pie for breakfast with honest Vermont maple syrup on it—was a great man to me. For had he not written a tome about Alexander the Great's Indian campaign, with a letter from Gladstone as introduction? On his library shelves he had many old volumes about India, such as *The Tale of a Thug* and *The History of the Mutiny*. One of his favorite quotations was the saying of Tippoo Sultan, that it is better to live one year as a tiger than a thousand as a sheep. And he told me the fascinating story of stout Job Charnock of the old East India Company, who laid out the plan of the modern Calcutta,

the second city of the British Empire—how he had snatched a young and lovely Hindu widow from her husband's funeral pyre and married her himself. *Thuggee* and widow-burning went well with my memories of Dikk's tales of tigers and elephants.

Later, when my brother was reading Stevenson's outré *Master of Ballantrae*, with its faithful Hindu, Secundra Das, who tried to outwit his master's enemies by burying him alive in the wilds of the Adirondacks, and my sister was getting *Plain Tales from the Hills* from the lending library and humming "Pale hands I loved beside the Shalimar," I was running with Mowgli the wolf-boy in the jungle, and believed in the rope trick. At prep school I was dipping into Yoga.

I was some years older, however, a University Fellow at Princeton, before I really grasped the size and geographical importance of India, let alone its political significance to the world. In one of my classes I had referred to the literature of the early Aryans, and at the close of the lecture a student incidentally inquired how large India was. Of course (it is the time-worn dodge of the college instructor) I answered, "Look it up at the library: that is the only way you will remember it," and sneaked off to look it up myself in the encyclopedia.

The mile was always an unsatisfactory measuring rod to me, and a row of digits and zeros no fillip to the imagination. I traced India's contours on my globe, cut out the tracing and, twirling the sphere, laid it on the checkered map of the United States. I had a clear enough conception of the extent of this country—it took three days to cross it on the streamlined Limited.

I set the easternmost tip of my paper India (which was Assam, at the Burma frontier) on New York City. The great wall of the Himalayas, India's northern barrier, extended from Albany, westward across New York State, Lake Erie, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota, with Darjeeling (on the edge of Tibet) at Detroit. Kashmir, most northern of India's Native States, stretched far up over Manitoba, its frontier bisecting Lake Winnipeg. The western tip of my cutting (Beluchistan)



was in eastern Oregon. Cape Comorin, India's southern extremity, was away below the foot of Texas, halfway down the Province of Tamaulipas, Mexico. The Andaman Archipelago, the Devil's Island of India's criminals, stretched through central Florida, and Ceylon, Cape Comorin's pendant, was approximately the size of the lower half of that state. Burma I had not counted at all, but it would about cover Alaska.

A vast country! Of the Eastern Hemisphere only Russia and pre-war China are larger. It is about equal to all Europe without Russia. When one boards the Bombay express at Calcutta the trip would carry him, roughly, from Chicago to Salt Lake City. When he leaves Madras in the south to the tropical monsoon rains, and to forget the atrocious furnace heat and prickling wind of the dry season makes for Kashmir in a houseboat—as do all the British officers who can get leave, and the teachers and missionaries who can be spared—he is taking on a journey equivalent to a run from Brownsville at the lower tip of Texas to Calgary in Alberta! No wonder geographers nowadays call India a subcontinent.

Every time I have crossed it, its population has seemed more appalling. It is equal to that of all Europe, three times that of the United States, more than in North and South America together. More than twice the number that ever groveled or grandeed it under the Roman Empire. A fifth of the whole human race live in India!

I think the day I laid my tracing on the sphere marked the birth of my adult interest in India. It drove me to reading, and I acquired a sizable book-shelf which in time became an alcove. To me India is the most fascinating country in the world. Its people, a baffling jumble of races and languages and religions, crosscut and whipsawed by conflicting customs and prejudices that are stronger than laws, ask for understanding and the sympathy it brings, and only a long reach and a bird's-eye view of India's history can open the door.

From as far back as we can go, history, as the West knows it, seems to have meant very little to the Indians. There were

other things more important, such as religion, philosophy and social ceremonials. They made few records of their kings and dynasties. It took the West to teach them that the mere dry facts of history have their value. But by piecing the bits together we have learned a good deal.

We know that before any sort of civilization began India was inhabited by a people of black skins, flat noses and kinky hair, akin to the negroid races of Africa, from whence they may well have come. These were overrun by a people very different from them, with reddish-black skin, straight hair and pointed noses. These came from the northeast, beyond the Himalayas. We call them Dravidians.

They came in colossal numbers and overspread all India, establishing strong kingdoms and driving the black aborigines into the inaccessible mountains and swampy regions.

Then, some three millenniums before Jesus—five thousand years ago—down through Afghanistan and the northern mountain passes poured a flood of hawk-faced white invaders. They came from the region in Central Asia north of the Caucasus and east of the Caspian Sea. Various branches traveled in different directions and account for many of the world's modern races: some went southwest and became the Persians, the Greeks and the Romans. Others went northwest and became the Celts, the Teutons and the Slavs. The earliest of all to leave the parent stock were these Caucasian ancestors of the present-day Hindus, who came down through the passes into what is now India.

Their language was Sanskrit, the mother of all our Western languages, except perhaps Basque and Finnish, which trace to the Mongol. Its words stipple all the principle modern European tongues. The Sanskrit word, for instance, for "house" is *dama* or *dam*; in Persian it is *demana*, in Greek *domos*, in Latin *domus*, in Irish *dahm*, in the Slavonic *domu* and *dôm*. Their original name was perhaps Arioi [Honorable Men] as Herodotus called the Medes. Strabo terms them Ariana. Modernly we call them Aryans. The word persists in Iran (Persia) and Eire (Erin).

They had been a pastoral, not a nomad, people and had a higher civilization than that of the Dravidians. They spun and wove with looms. They knew gold, silver, tin and copper. They were not so many when they came, perhaps only a few million, but they were fighting men, with bows and arrows, spears, swords and shields. They had horses and they brewed beer. Above all they were cleverer and keener witted than the sturdy plodding reddish-black folk they found in possession. So that they easily established supremacy over them.

They made their realm the loamy Ganges Valley where they built Benares, their holy city. From keeping flocks and herds, they became farmers. They built walled towns and gave their houses doors and windows. They counted by tens. Their years had three hundred and sixty days. They had a common law, public games, drums, wind- and string-instruments of music, and the dance.

White of skin when they came, they did not stay so. Mating with the reddish-black Dravidians, they grew dark like them. This admixture and unnumbered generations of India's blazing sun have made the Hindus now of one general complexion, except that in the northwest the lighter-skinned prevail because there the Aryans were in larger proportion.

In their original home the Aryans had worshiped the sky, sun, moon, sea and fire. In their new home they gave gods and goddesses to these—Indra (Sky), Savitri (Sun), Soma (Moon), Varuna (Sea), Agni (Fire). They built temples to them and worshiped them, in time inventing, like all primitive peoples, notably the Greeks, a complicated mythology to explain them. And as every religious system must have ceremonies of worship and sacrifice, so the Sanskrit Aryans developed theirs, which in time were to grow almost as complicated as those of the ancient Egyptians.

They did not call themselves Hindus in those early centuries. The first great river they had come to after they crossed the Khyber Pass they named Sinhu [River]. It is the modern Indus, which gave the early mariners the name India. From

this the Dravidians of the northwest, where they first settled, called them Sindhus, and the name went with them over the whole Ganges Valley. Two thousand years later it had become "Hindus."

There is a pattern that all peoples seem inevitably to follow as they develop their social life. At first, under the ruler, the priestly class forms. This is most important, for the specialty of its members is keeping on the right side of the gods. Next are the nobility, who are always the fighters, protecting the ruler, to whom they look for place and favors, and the country from invasion by enemies. Then come the common people, and at the foot of the ladder the slaves. In Rome it was priest, patrician, plebeian and slave. In England priest, earl, thane and thrall. In India probably the first distinction was simply between Aryan and non-Aryan; but gradually the Aryan group began to coalesce in the three classes of priest, soldier and farmer-trader. The upperlings being thus provided for, the underlings, the non-Aryan Dravidians, became the helot hewers of wood and drawers of water for their betters. With each century the four classes tended to become more rigid and hereditary.

The brainiest of the Aryans naturally gravitated to the priesthood. It took the best minds to organize and master the code of ceremonial worship which became more and more elaborate. They were the Shamans, the medicine-men, the witch-doctors and sky-cloud-talkers of the race. Wealth came their way. They grew exclusive and arrogant, even denying allegiance to the king. They called themselves Brahmans and claimed that they alone could perform the ceremonies and decree the sacrifices in a manner pleasing to the gods.

They were able at length to make their power supreme and lasting. They gave to the four classes a religious sanction, like that which the Jewish leaders gave to the Laws of Moses. They made them an inherent part of the system by the invention of that Frankenstein monster called Caste, which froze the system in its tracks. They made caste-transgression a sin against the high gods, and each caste a hermetically sealed compartment.

One could never go from a lower to a higher—from birth tub to winding sheet, as he was born so he must live and die.

It is hard to guess why they did this. Perhaps it was with the shrewd idea of keeping the stock pure. But it was too late for that, or else it did not work out as they had expected. For the pure Aryan strain is very thin today, even among the Brahmans. But caste had come, the prime curse of India through all the ages since.

The three Great Castes, the Brahman (priestly), the Kshatriya (soldier) and the Vaishya (farmer-trader) were the Aryans, the chosen of heaven, the Brahman the richest cream of the lot. They were the "Twice Born," the wearers of the sacred cord. The fourth caste, the Sudras (the indigenous non-Aryan Dravidians), took the scrapings. Still below these were the casteless Vratyas, the dregs of the black aborigines whom the Dravidians had driven into the jackal waste places and the wild tracts of hill and jungle. These, the pariahs, the eaters of carrion, became the unhappy people whom nowadays the Indian government terms the "depressed classes," the so-called Untouchables, whose very presence and shadow polluted.

Some of the outlaws remained in their hidden fastnesses, unabsorbed and unreckoned. Their remnants still exist. In landlocked mountains or marshland, staring at him from the thorn bush, or darting like shadows through the underbrush, the hunter may come upon wild little black "hill men," the Kohls, the Khonds, the Bhils, the Santals, the Shologas. India holds eleven millions of these. And still further down the scale, within a hundred miles of populous towns, yet unreached by civilization and seldom seen by white men, are tangled whorls of inbred, naked, half-savage people like the dwarfed dirt-eaters of Brazil's Matto Grosso, who worship the tiger and feed on bee larvae and wood lice. In the old days they used to be caught, like animals, in hunting nets. In the Mysore jungle my beaters were of these folk and my *mahouts* talked with them by signs.

This "freezing" of classes into steel-bound castes by the Brahmans took place perhaps a thousand years before Jesus,

when King Solomon was building his Temple to Jahveh in Jerusalem.

Then, having placed all power, all authority and the keys of the Hindu heaven irrevocably in the hands of their own caste, the Brahmans (or the subtlest minds among them) began writing one of the most extraordinary chapters in the whole history of human thought. They turned from study of their cult to philosophy. Who and what am I? Where did I come from and where am I going? What is the essence of being? What and whose law rules this universe?

There is no record of the appearance among them of an Indian Plato or Spinoza, a Hegel or a Kant. Without a trace of stumbling beginnings there came to life a body of abstruse speculation which remains today the wonder and admiration of modern philosophers and metaphysicians.

This formed the kernel of a voluminous literature which has become known to the West only within living memory. For many centuries, no doubt, it remained, like the Homeric chants, unwritten, handed down verbally from generation to generation by Brahmans of extraordinary memory. It achieved written form only two or three centuries before Jesus.

Beside its philosophy it contains treatises on grammar, logic, law and mathematics and, like the Jewish Kabalah, ancient recipes and formulas of magic and esoteric medicine. Like the Old Testament it holds theology and liturgy, a "Flood Story" and the oldest and most striking variant of the Creation myth of the Jewish Genesis with which all peoples seem to have begun their cosmogonies. Unlike the Genesis account it is a highly spiritualized version.

This astonishing mass of literature, the Vedas, came into being within a period of little more than a thousand years. Its poetic portions, India's chiefest glory, embalm two verse epics which have been called "perhaps the most beautiful work of the literature of the world."

The phrase is not the braggadocio of the young Westernized Indian who holds forth on the American lecture platform and

who may gravely inform you that ancient India had absolutely everything—even appendectomy and the flying machine. It is the considered judgment of the ripest Western scholars.

The lecturer, however, is apt to proceed to the assumption that the standard of learning of the Sanskrit Hindus, as a whole, surpassed anything the world has ever known. He speaks as if two thousand years ago the Vedas were their ordinary mental pabulum, like the Bible to the studious New England Puritans. When the possessors of this organized knowledge and literature could have been only a select class, like Europe's scholar-monks of the Middle Ages who, when baron was fighting baron and every countryside was a welter of burning, banditry and rape, holed up in the caves of the Sinai Desert to keep their knowledge and its lore from perishing. The literati of the early Aryans must have been such specialists, and the run-of-the-mill masses as ignorant as any masses of Europe.

For themselves the Brahman brain trust spiritualized their religious system. As in the Vedas they had spiritualized the account of the Creation myth, so they modified the grosser forms of their ancestral religion. The marriage of a god and goddess became the mystical union of two eternal principles. Their three chief deities, Brahm, Vishnu and Siva, became "manifestations" of the one Supreme Being, in his different aspects of Creator, Preserver and Destroyer.

This, however, was over the heads of the people, who, knowing nothing of metaphysics, while the Brahman soul-searchers were immersed in their philosophical speculation, went on elaborating their religious system, incorporating local deities and vulgar practices and superstitions borrowed from the grosser Dravidian cults about them. It had never been a coherent system founded by any one teacher or school, such as Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism or Mohammedism, and under this treatment it became a hodgepodge of obscene barbarisms, in which ghosts and goblins, demigods and multicolored demons from all imagined hells, with deities of tribe, neighborhood and household, mingled indiscriminately with the Aryan primal



gods, and the noble doctrine of Reincarnation (which is *Karma*) adopted from some savage strain in the population, went hand in hand with phallus-worship, self-torture and human sacrifice.

In one sense the Hinduism that gradually shaped itself was not a religion at all as the West habitually uses the word, but a complex more like the Japanese Shinto, though without its ancestor-worship. Later it was to include the doctrine of Nirvana (absorption into the great Oversoul) as now held by the Brahmins.

There were courageous souls, even among the Brahmins themselves, who declined to accept the supremacy of their priesthood and its teaching and were revolted by the grossness of the popular religion. The first great rebel was Gautama, the Buddha.

A king's son, of high degree, he was no doubt familiar with the Aryan philosophy. When, after his long meditation under the *bo* tree, he attained "enlightenment," he accepted Reincarnation, but he recognized caste as an excrescence without place or standing in the ancient system, the Brahman priesthood as perverters of the true teaching, and the Hinduism of his time as a monstrous thing. When he came down from northern Nepal, to preach at Sarnath, near Benares on the Ganges, the Brahmins knew him for their mortal enemy.

To offset his teaching they proceeded to rivet the shackles of caste, the instrument of their power, even more firmly. They developed a code for the castes which, so far as was possible, should rule all human action. It was for ruler and subject, for rich and poor. It covered every civil right and privilege, within each caste and between the castes, laying down laws for food and dress, family duties and ceremonies, marriage, trades and occupations, political and moral obligations. It left no feature of life untouched. It even made sacred the cow, which their ancestors had especially cherished and protected as being the source of a main article of their diet.

These regulations make up the Hindu *Shastra*, the Sacred Law, by which every orthodox Hindu lives and dies today. It is expressed in the so-called Code of Manu. The date of this

shadowy lawgiver is uncertain, if indeed he was any more a historical personage than the legendary Homer. The Vedas call him the progenitor of the human race, and later writings an offspring of the Supreme Being. Some Indians go so far as to claim that the laws of Minos in Crete, the Mosaic code and the ancient Roman laws, all derive from the Code of Manu.

This riveting of the bars of caste must have taken many generations to accomplish, but there is little doubt that it was deliberate. The period of crystallization coincided with the period when Buddha's teaching was most active.

Gautama's gospel thrived mightily for a time. Four centuries after him the great Emperor Asoka, who loved peace though he had conquered India by the sword, accepted it, and as Constantine did with Christianity, made it the state religion. Just as Russia, before the Muscovite khans began the process of drawing under them, one by one, contiguous khanates ruled by local chiefs, so Asoka drew within the orbit of his rule India's clutter of smaller or greater kingdoms, whose people spoke different tongues and were of varying grades of culture. He ruled over more of India than any other man before or since. He supported sixty-four thousand Buddhist priests, teaching the Good Gospel by persuasion rather than the sword. His graven edicts dotted all India, and he set up hundreds of columns on which was carved, "For what do I toil? For no other end than this, that I may pay my debt to living beings."

Asoka passed, and so too, after more than a thousand years, Gautama's teaching was to pass. The Buddha was India's Martin Luther, and Buddhism was the Indian Reformation, but a Reformation that failed. In the end it subsided like an ebb tide, leaving only tiny pools in hollows here and there. The last one has not yet entirely vanished; it is the half-million Buddhists in northeast India, near the Burma border. The Buddha now is a prophet not without honor in all of eastern Asia save his own country.

There is a folk tale in India that the Brahman story-teller may tell you when he is merry enough, which the native fancy has

twisted to picture the Buddha's defeat. Gautama was a very strong man, a wrestler who thought himself without equal. But this opinion was not shared by the mighty chief of the Brahman, who fancied himself a wrestler also. He had an elephant, a giant of pachyderms—as was to be expected, for (the storyteller will declare, with a sly twinkle in his eye) the animal was Hinduism itself. Perhaps it recognized Gautama as his master's enemy; at any rate it trod on the Buddha's face as he lay asleep under a tree in the forest. Thinking a mosquito had alighted on him, Gautama brushed it away, then, wakened by the brute's angry trumpet, he rose and, beholding the elephant and recognizing it as Hinduism, dealt it a blow that knocked it senseless. Seizing its trunk, he threw it over his shoulder and set out for the Brahman's house, minded to teach him to keep his outrageous animal from pestering honest wayfarers. When he came to the garden wall he shouted loudly, "Ho, Brahman! Here is your property. Take it and teach it better manners, or I will teach *you* something!" With which he threw it over the wall. At that he heard a childish treble, the voice of a little girl, crying to someone in the house, "Mama! Mama! Some lousy beggar has thrown a live mouse into our garden!" "Never mind, my child," came a woman's voice. "I will sweep it out." Then was heard the swish of a twig broom, the gate opened, and out flew the monstrous elephant in a cloud of dust and dead leaves. When Buddha saw this, he said to himself, "If that is only his wife and child, what must the Brahman himself be! This land is no place for me!" And he set out sadly for Burma.

There were other rebels against Hinduism beside the Buddha. There was Mahavira the Jina, born a century later, founder of the Jain sect, whose million and a half members also reject caste and the authority of the Vedas while holding to Reincarnation and Nirvana. He was the first great apostle, after Gautama, of *Ahimsa*, non-violence toward all living things. The strictest of the Jains have so great a regard for life of all grades that they strain the water they drink and wear a gauze scarf

over their faces lest they breathe in a gnat. This and a dozen other sects and subsects added to the religious mixture.

At this time, a few centuries before the opening of our Christian Era, there is no doubt that India's civilization, particularly of the Brahman class, was comparatively a high one. There is no evidence, however, that it was greatly superior to some others, and no ground for believing, as is sometimes stated, that "five thousand years before Jesus India had a civilization superior to Babylon's or Egypt's." This opinion, no doubt, is based on the remarkable body of philosophy which the Brahmans possessed but which could not have reached the masses. These were never as cultured as the Greeks at their peak, nor was India ever as prosperous, part to part, as Rome.

It is doubtful if even China in any period knew such poverty.

## Chapter Two

### PLUNDERBUND OF ASIA

So far, since the coming of the Aryans, India had not felt the impact of outer peoples. Darius the Mede, the Persian King, had sent his Admiral Scylax to explore the river Indus but had attempted no conquest. But now, three centuries before Jesus, came Alexander the Great, to trounce the Hindu King Porus with his armies and chariots. In the great battle he captured Porus' war elephant, which had "fought valiantly for his master." Roaming its forests three hundred and fifty years afterward, says the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, the hoary mammoth was found alive, with the golden band the victor had riveted about his tusk, which said, "Alexander, Son of Jupiter, hath dedicated Ajax" (so he had renamed him) "to the Sun." Alexander founded many cities and garrisoned them with Greek armies. It was generations before India drove some of them out and absorbed the rest.

After that wave upon wave of Asian hordes flooded the Ganges Valley, pouring through the gorges of the northwest Himalayas and across the stupendous passes of the Pamirs, the "Roof of the World," into the lush ranges of north India. Like the ferocious, lairless red-dog of India's Deccan, which runs in a yapping pack and turns aside for nothing, not even the wild bison. Ten may fall, a hundred may die, but there are always more following on their trail, and they never stop till they reach their hunting ground.

So these wild horsemen poured into India, tribe upon tribe, army after army, hungry for loot and women. Tatars, Afghan Mongols, Semitic Arabs, Mohammedans, Jews from Asia Minor, Assyrians, Greeks, Chaldeans, Medes, Persians, Turks—they trod on one another's heels. There was no end to them. They made north India a battleground and plunderbund for centuries. Worst, perhaps, were the so-called "White Huns," with their stabbing-knives and double-headed axes, who came

through Persia and what is now Afghanistan, led by their bloodthirsty chief, the "Attila of India." It was the fifth century of our era before their strain faded out, the ripple submerged in the Hindu racial ocean.

The Afghan Mohammedans began their incursions in the seventh century, only thirty-two years after the death of the Prophet. They came again and again. Three hundred years more and they held north India as far east as Benares, and Delhi was first heard of as India's Moslem capital. In the thirteenth century came the galloping myriads of Gengis Khan, gory-handed from his rape of southern China—that bogey of eastern Europe who the Japanese say was a brother of their greatest and most infamous shogun Yoritomo, exiled to the country of the Amur on the Asian mainland and adopted by the khan who was his putative father. He swept the war-ravaged plain of Peshawar in north India with fire and sword. Men whose eyes he had burned out with a white-hot dagger were living when the invading Tamerlane, the Chagtai-Turk bully, aped him with his cold-blooded butcheries. All of these brigand-adventurers, when they departed, left their thousands of avid ruffians behind them.

One more Hindu reformer, a contemporary of Luther, brightens the picture: Nanak, the founder of India's Sikhs, the falcon-eyed fighting tribes of the northwest Punjab. They are the Puritans of India. They cut away caste, religious vestments, ostentatious prayer and penance. They believe in the One God, hate equally Hindu idolatry and Brahman ritualism, and eat meat.

The word "*sikh*" means student. The Sikhs are neither a race, a nationality nor a caste. One cannot be born a Sikh; he must be made one by a distinctive ceremony. He must carry on his person a comb, a steel armlet and a knife, the first to symbolize cleanliness (for all his life he may not cut hair or beard), the second representing a shield, and the last because it is the badge of the fighter.

Meanwhile India's northwest gate—the Khyber Pass—had fallen to the invasion that, unlike the rest, was never, through

all the centuries since, to be really absorbed. The faith that had been born with Mohammed in Arabia sent its legions to glut its power on the riches across the mountains. Baber the Lion, great-great-great-grandson of Tamerlane, and incidentally no Mogul himself, in the sixteenth century gained the mastery over north India and founded the Mogul Empire. He did not apply to his new subjects the "circumcision or death" policy Moslem conquerors applied to the infidel in more western lands. Having with great slaughter taken the kingdom of Delhi as far as the border of Bengal, he left the people their religion and bequeathed a secure reign to his son.

His grandson, Akbar the Great, India's first civil organizer, contemporary of Philip of Spain, Henry IV of France and Elizabeth of England, was the dynasty's brightest star. Being Moslem, and of a Persian mother, caste meant less than nothing to him, and he dreamed of a united empire, from the Himalayas to the Indian Ocean. His boast was that his one law applied to all, of whatever blood or sect. He received at his court Moslem, Hindu and Christian without distinction and made his Sikhs eat with the rest. He must have had a sneaking regard for the Brahman mind, for he welcomed foreign philosophers and enjoyed setting them to wrangling with the local talent in his court.

As a foreigner he could create a semblance of unity but it dissolved when his iron grasp failed. His son did not emulate him, and his grandson, Shah Jehan, the "King of the World," cared for little but his adored Persian Empress and architecture. In her memory he built that breath-taking wonder, the Taj Mahal, which must stand, in its dream-garden of fountains and water courses, even above Peking's Temple of Heaven, unique among all structures of beauty the genius of man has reared. After him the Mogul Empire crumbled and rotted, ready for the English and Good Queen Bess' Honorable East India Company.

For, not to be outdone by the thundering hordes of Asia, Europe, too, had now entered the race. Not only the long-headed

English, but the sultry Portuguese traders, the fiery French privateers, the stolid Dutch master mariners. The Dutch to rout the Portuguese, the English to turn tables on the Dutch. While Holland's sober burghers were founding the city of New Amsterdam her frigates were bloodily fighting the English in Indian waters, as the English starved out the last French garrison. Austria, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, all came to nibble, like rats about a redolent cheese. These were to give India a brand-new and ubiquitous type, the Eurasian.

The wars on the east coast boomed on, unheeded by the only peaceful invasion India, in all her Aryan history, has known. That was the placid coming of the Parsees, the Zoroastrian fire-worshippers who fled from their Persian homeland after its eighteenth-century conquest by the Arabs. Their center became Bombay on the west coast. A canny, industrious, money-making lot they were, who asked nothing but to be let alone. They numbered less than a hundred thousand. This was India's last influx of a foreign people.

The East India Company acquired enormous tracts and was guilty of many misdeeds in the process. In London it was a golden name, blazoned by money manipulators who knew what they wanted, which was more money. The chief wielders of its power in India were a daring crew, familiar, most of them, with battle, murder and sudden death, from which they neither asked nor expected the Lord to deliver them. Some of them touched bribery and one forgery. They were backed by a trained and efficient army, and England was far away.

There the stinging eloquence of the House of Commons' most precocious group, Edmund Burke, Sheridan, Charles Fox, at length focused the searchlight of public opinion on the company's transgressions. Regulating Acts and the final impeachment of Warren Hastings, the first governor-general, followed. England made a clean sweep of it and the soiled linen was washed in public—a rare occurrence for her. How much justice was in the Hastings technical verdict of "not guilty" is a moot point. His impeachment dragged on for seven years and left him



a broken and impoverished man. Clive, tortured by a lingering malady, died by his own hand at forty-eight.

In 1857 the Mutiny shook England. It was crushed; both Hindu and Moslem nobility were crushed with it, and India, with the Queen's Proclamation, became a possession of the British Empire.

England took it, with the guilt of the Company's sins and the wide areas the rapacious generalship of Clive and the astute diplomacy of Dupleix had gained for it; with its pendent territories, the petty hereditary principalities and the great dynastic States of its powerful maharajas, with its fever of religious intolerance, its splendor and squalor, its child-marriage and famine and disease. A land invaded and re-invaded over and over, cursed with the spawn of the land pirates and off-scourings of half a world, ulcered by the bartering and battenings of foreign dynasty after foreign dynasty, and hating the new usurper as it had hated all the others.

Calcutta, the Company's eastern bastion and the chief city of Bengal Province, was made the capital of British India and the seat of its governor-general, soon to be called a viceroy. And with a Secretary of State for India in the Cabinet, and an India Office in London's Whitehall, England set out to rule her new myriad dusky subjects, who as time went on were to give her many a headache.

That was only eighty-five years ago. I have a friend who remembers when it happened very well. He is a Yogi, a holy man who has sat for many years, his naked body daubed with gray ashes, on an antelope skin before a rift in a rocky hillside on the outskirts of the very holy town of Kotaban, sacred to the demigod Rama, near Muttra. I will not say how old he is, for only an Indian would believe me.

### Chapter Three

## THE GREAT BABEL

ONE must draw a line between the India before and after the British take-over. Indians seldom do this. When they speak of the transgressions of the British Government they are including all the iniquities of the East India Company, back to 1668, and the fat later years when its booming shares touched gargantuan values. A good deal of the written history of the early Company was biased: the true estimate lies somewhere between Lord Macaulay's damning *Essays on Lord Clive and Warren Hastings* and Zanuck's *Clive of India*—if you remember Ronald Coleman's glorified film version. But both dealt with the "John Company," not the British Government.

And for the Company there was much also on the credit side. The fair-minded student would not quarrel with the two Afghan wars which blocked the threatened advance of czarist Russia on Central Asia. Nor would he condemn the two wars with the fighting brotherhood of the Sikhs, who had abandoned their old-time principles to become a kingdom that grew steadily more arrogant till their Punjab was annexed to British India and their leader became a country gentleman in Norfolk. The Company gave peace to the territory it incorporated. It wiped out the Thugs, that infamous semireligious clan who disguised themselves as Hindu peddlers and strangled wayfarers with their girdles for the joy of Kali, the bloodthirsty consort of the god Siva. It did away with slavery and widow-burning.

A scant twenty years of British rule, after the take-over, and Disraeli, Victoria's suave Prime Minister, dangled an extra crown before her captivated gaze, and she assumed the proud title of Empress of India. Twenty years more and she was a plethoric old woman, who showed herself on Buckingham's balcony with her hand on the arm of her turbaned Indian attendant, and at Balmoral Castle, with her Scotch coachman

John Brown, counted the spoons. Meanwhile her new Indian Government had made headway with its gigantic task.

It had reorganized the Company's army and reinforced it in the northwest (the Russian threat of invasion by way of the Khyber Pass, that had preceded the Sikh wars, still giving the London Foreign Office nightmares) and built cantonments at strategic points. It wanted no more Mutinies.

Macaulay had worked out a system of education for the country which used the English language. The Moslems would have none of it: they have always been distrustful of Western education. Even Akbar, the greatest of the Mogul emperors, could not read. His biography was dictated to a scribe. But the Brahmans had taken to law and medicine as cats to cream. Universities had mushroomed in every province, and B.A.s and M.A.s were becoming as thick as flies. Indians had been given a share in the framing of the laws that governed them, a small share, but an earnest of what might come in future.

The Indian Government had built twenty-five thousand miles of railroad. It had put nineteen and a quarter million acres under irrigation in sections where for centuries repeated famines had been a terror and a scourge. In 1876 five million people had starved to death; now the famine was beaten.

For three hundred years after Vasco da Gama set out, six years after Columbus, with his letter to the Great Cham of Tartary, the land he found had for the West the aroma of spices and sandalwood, the sheen of pearls, the lure of "apes and ivory and peacocks." Our old-time missionaries wangled its "coral strand" into the hymnbook. But by the sunset of the nineteenth century its magic and mystery were getting threadbare. The Kiplingesque period left it still starving and opulent, but the empire's far-flung battleline had been replaced by a humdrum army of civil service men. The machine had thrown out a vast network, drawing into it an ever increasing number of Indians and beginning now to cover the whole country. Romantic adventure was out and hard work was in for Government

House in Calcutta, the eye, ear and hand of London's India Office.

At the new century's dawn Calcutta was a city for the empire to be proud of, a sprawling, misty metropolis, second in area and population only to London itself. When it was founded there had been no railroads in the world, let alone in India. Inland transportation of merchandise, if not by elephant or camel-back, had been by the lumbering, high-wheel bullock cart, and the city was placed as far up the Hooghly River, one of the delta branches of the Ganges, as seafaring ships could go. Its docks stretched for miles and handled nearly a third of India's foreign trade.

It is a British city with Indian trimmings, like Bombay on the western coast. Some years ago it amused me to assemble a collection of old engravings of the town, and it is extraordinary to see how little in all its essentials the Calcutta of today has changed from the Calcutta of the pleasant lotus-eating world of half a century ago.

There is still the great rectangle of its *maidan* shaded by its sacred *neem* trees, showing at one end, bowered in foliage, the stately Government House, built over a hundred years ago by Lord Wellesley and modeled after Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire, ancestral home of Lord Curzon, the viceroy-to-be. The viceregal court has gone to the New Delhi capital, but the Bengal government functions here, and the Governor's Guard, in their dazzling red and gold uniforms, stand at the great gate.

There is still the business district, huge, solid, substantial, whose brick-red and gray buildings might have been lifted out of London's Threadneedle Street, and its European residential section, a bit of London's suburbia, high-walled, green-hedged and gardened, with its wide thoroughfares, all quite unchanged, except that the jiggeting native *tongas* have given place to purring limousines, and the tramcars are streamlined. The city is still the center of eastern India's social life, for representatives of business corporations and their wives, and for English matrons with daughters out to net their men, facetiously called the "fishing fleet" by the old residents.

Calcutta, with its British nucleus, like every other city of British India—like Bombay in the west, Madras in the south—is a microcosm. All India passes along its wide Chowringhi Road which skirts the *maidan*. Stroll it a mile and you are confronted with the main problems of the British government. Races, religions, tongues, classes, are jumbled together as in no other country in the world. So they were, no doubt, when the most ancient banyan tree in India was a sapling, for India changes as slowly as a granite mountain. My photographs of the streets and squares taken in 1900 might have been snapped yesterday.

The pavements are gory with huge blood-red splotches. When I first saw these stigmata of the betel-nut chewer I thought some poor wretch had been having a hemorrhage. But is it more horrid, after all, than the tenacious wads of discarded masticatory that make New York's Great White Way look like the joy promenade of Uncle Remus' "Tar Baby"? I have known few Indians who are not *pan* addicts, though the better class indulge the vice mostly in private.

The street signs are in three languages and as many scripts, one reminding you of a kind of bunched-up shorthand and another faintly suggesting Egyptian cuneiform written sideways. Here the two principal tongues one hears about him are Hindi and Urdu, one with most Sanskrit words and the other with most Persian. Hindustani, the *lingua franca*, spoken by about a third of the population of India, is a combination of these two.

At home one can go from Cape Cod to San Diego and from Seattle to Key West, and the Pullman conductor, the hotel clerk, the taxi driver and the colored boy who shines one's shoes, speak the same language. A hundred miles in India and you may be among people speaking a tongue you have never heard of. Bengali, Kashmiri, Pushtu, Gujarati, Mahratti, Telugu, Tamil—there are twenty-four main ones, as many as the national languages of Europe. The government has to use fifteen of them to carry on its official business. Which would be the best choice for a common language (if any) for the country

is a perennial argument. North India determinedly says one, and south India furiously says another. As all educated Indians speak English in addition to their own tongue one can go further with it than with any other.

The bulk of the people passing along the street are Hindus of the three lower castes, and wear the native *dhoti*.

A Hindustani dictionary will tell you the word means "the cloth for trousers." Not trousers, mind you, but cloth *for* trousers. It is a square of cotton which unsuccessfully struggles to take their place, one side forming an unsightly bag in the rear, and the other side brought up between the legs and tucked into the waist—the most slipshod, slovenly and frightful costume, probably, that God ever allowed poverty and necessity to invent.

The *dhoti* wearers cover India, most thickly in the northern and central portions, the great mass of mixed Aryan and Dravidian blood, about sixty million, whose skins show every gradation from black to red, and fifty-four million unmixed Dravidians, the folk the Aryans found when they came and incorporated into their Hinduism, worker bees of the Hindu hive.

These latter make up the fourth caste, the Sudras, the greatest single segment of the population. For the most part they are the manual laborers and the small businessmen, what we would call "the masses," a little of everything in the humble line. The barber squatting on his square of matting under the tree, shaving a customer for his copper, and the sharp-eyed fortune teller in his booth beside him, are Sudras. The plasterer and the paper hanger, the fruiterer, the man who hawks the newspapers and drives the *tonga*, the streetcar conductor and the gardener are Sudras. But not all Sudras are humble. Some are millionaires. I know one maharaja who is of the caste.

If you have learned the special code of the turban-tie (only a few foreigners ever get so far) you can tell the southern strangers from the rest. Here and there you can pick out a Telugu from the Coromandel coast, or a sooty, bullet-headed Tamil of southeast Madras Province. No matter how long

they may stay here in Bengal they will not feel at home. Their roots are in the south. They do not think of this northern India as being a part of their own country. They do not think of themselves as Indian. They call themselves Telugus or Tamils. They have no conception of what the word "nationality" means to you and me in the United States.

The scattered women in the crowd are Hindu, for though it is a good many years since the British and American missionaries launched the feminist movement, and custom is slowly changing, Moslem women in this respect are backward. But Hindu women go about in public nowadays, even without their husbands. These perhaps have been shopping, or are coming from the cinema. Their home life, however, shows little change: their husbands (the beauty-spot on the forehead signifies that the wearer is not a widow) do not take them out to dinner parties, and at home they do not dine at all till their husbands have finished or sit down when their husbands are standing. The silken sari and the jewel in the nostril show they are of one of the upper castes, and the one in the soberer dress, without the beauty-spot and nose jewel, is one of India's twenty-six million unhappy widows.

It is quite possible that she never lived with her husband, for it is the ceremony that constitutes marriage. Most Hindu women are married when they are children and remain in their parents' home. If their husbands die before they begin cohabitation they are widows and few widows remarry, for the old Hindu law forbids it and only some of the lower sub-castes ignore the prohibition.

The problem of woman's part in the government is unique in India. Orthodox Hinduism, which hates the West and all its works, enters into it, the seclusion of the *purdah*, the sacred law of the *Shashtra*, the inhibitions of caste—a hundred elements unknown to Christendom. Franchise for women is still in the experimental stage.

The portly, patrician figure behind the women is a Parsee. You know him by his quaint cap shaped like a horse's hoof,

made of goatskin, resembling a tarboosh but without the tassel. Business, preferably banking, is his passion. I never heard of a poor Parsee. His home at Bombay keeps burning the sacred Zoroastrian fire, and the planing vultures over the Towers of Silence on Malabar Hill will feast on his body when he is dead. He takes no stock in Hinduism, though a Hindu wife carries no social penalty for him. He is outside the bound of all communal activity and means to stay there. In politics, but for a few notable exceptions, he is a conservative.

The lighter-skinned, comely, aquiline-nosed pedestrians for whom passers-by seem instinctively to make respectful way, as in America one does for the "cloth" of priest or clergyman, are Brahmins. There are ten million of them in this northern India, all that is left of the so-called pure Aryan, and very mixed at that. They compose the clan that two, perhaps three, thousand years ago made itself religious master of the Hindus.

One is passing just now—under the neck-edge of his robe you can see the sacred cord that loops over his left shoulder. He must take a bath not only every morning, but after every act or contact that can be considered unclean. He is the greatest ritualist the world has ever known. He eats and sleeps and works by the strictest religious rules. If he is of the austere priestly class, the harshest monkhood of the Middle Ages was a lawless bohemianism beside the pitiless routine he endures every day of his life. He may not lift his gaze above a woman's ankles, unless she is of his own caste and known to him, and must avert his eyes when he passes a scavenger or a man with no hair on his chest. He is very sure of himself and painfully exclusive. At non-political social affairs in the city he takes his refreshments at a separate marquee labeled "For Brahmins."

He is the grand master of ceremonies of the abominable parade of caste, by which the Hindu lives. Will a Brahmin worship in a Sudra's house? No. An orthodox Hindu will eat with a Parsee, but with a Hindu of another caste? Certainly not. Will he dare to take a wife from a higher caste than his own?



Never. Or give his daughter to a lad of lower caste? Not though by it his grandsons will be heirs to great riches and ride on elephants under gold umbrellas! From the beginning the three Great Castes seldom intermarried. Now they are split into as many hundred sub-castes. Every profession, every hereditary occupation, lawyer, weaver, cloth merchant, jeweler, peddler, has its little cell in the immense penitentiary, and these sub-castes likewise seldom intermarry.

The policeman standing on his inverted tub in the middle of the street intersection, directing the traffic with extended arms, is a Sikh. His badge is the uncut hair brought up to a knot under his turban, and the bushy black beard parted amidships and carried up on each side of his face by a cord to his crown. A crisp, clean citizen who by the rule of his sect cannot even smoke. He is from the northwest Punjab, the country of the strapping, straight-nosed, north-country plainsmen.

He is the dissenter *par excellence*; he dissents even from the teaching of Nanak, the revered founder of his brotherhood, who declared, "There are no Hindus and no Mohammedans, there are only men." For he hates them both, the Hindu for his caste and idolatry and the Moslem for his insistence that Mohammed is *the* Prophet. And having the noble firmness of the mule, he will probably go on hating them till he dies.

A meat-eating gamecock of a man, he has a preference for taking on the bandit-like Pathán hillbilly of the northern passes, but lacking a handy Pathán he will compromise on anyone else, anywhere, at any time. On one occasion, roused by the preaching of his chiefs that the Indian Government was unfriendly to his religion, he created a reign of terror in some portions of the Punjab that took a stern military campaign to put down.

This was only a temporary flurry, however. On the whole India's four or five million Sikhs stand out, a bulwark of the British military, from among all the turbulent hill-bred and hill-fed tribes of the northwest frontier, mingled of Arab and Afghan, Persian and Mongol, the dregs of the outland invaders. And they stand out from all the other strange breeds

along the Himalayan fringe, from the short, sturdy, broad-shouldered Gurkas (used so effectively in the Indian Army, the only true mercenaries left in the world) sifting across the Nepal line, to the tribes of mixed Tibetan, Mongol-Tatar and Burmese further east, gravel-cheeked and slit-eyed, whose chieftains still dance their weird war-dances wearing artificial tails. For generations Sikh soldiers policed the International Settlement at Shanghai, the streets of Hong Kong, the wharves of Singapore. Great Britain has no better, braver or more loyal soldiers.

There is a traffic snarl now at the cross-street. The trolley cars have stopped. An ascetic with wild eyes and tangled hair has flopped down in the middle of the track, while the burly policeman beseeches him to have a heart. He wears only a loincloth and his body is ash-daubed as gray as a squirrel's tail. His deity is some strange neighborhood god that even the Brahman priest, whom the policeman is bringing to persuade him to move on, has probably never heard of. For Hinduism has literally thousands of gods, lesser and greater, on its list. The Brahman has apparently used the voice of authority and the streetcars are moving again. Indian cities are used to scenes like this.

There is another holy man squatting there in the shade of the museum gateway, resting. He is a *sadhu*. His forehead is gridironed with turmeric paste and his robe is as dirty as possible. He is young, not more than thirty, and, one guesses, proud of his sanctity. His true place is in the jungle, whither, having made his pilgrimage to Benares and bathed in the Ganges, he is probably bound.

He has no earthly possession but his robe, his seven-knotted bamboo and his rosary; his daily handful of rice is given him unasked by the pious. All his treasures he is laying up in the Hindu heaven. In the jungle he will live on roots and wild berries. He will wear only a loincloth, smear his body with wood ashes, and practice austerities, deep meditation, concentration and breathing exercises, sitting cross-legged in the ancient lotus posture, with the soles of his feet turned upward on his

thighs, hoping to gain the longed-for Yoga, union with the Divine Essence. What has he to do with earthly laws or governments? The wild hunters, who live in the jungle round about, by their nightly campfires will tell tales of the lone recluse who talks with the panthers, and at last his sanctity will be recognized and he will be called a Yogi.

There is no countryside, no hill town, no desolate gorge without its Yogi, or one of the rival hermit sect, the Sunnyasi, who contribute nothing to the common-weal save holiness. They are the élite of the amazing number of dervishes, palmers and wandering fakirs who swarm about Hindu temples and holy places. The Ganges bank at Benares is double-lined with them.

Economically speaking, one must align with them the beggars. I was once discussing with an assemblyman the unemployment problem in America, and he remarked, "Here in India we have solved that problem. Our unemployed become beggars, and beggary is an institution." It is not only a recognized profession but even a dignified one, as I realized when walking with an English lady in Bombay. Accosted by a jaunty mendicant, she said to him, "A big husky man like you ought to be at work." "*I work?*" he answered with indignation. "*Memsahib*, I am a beggar!"

One more type, which like the holy man and the beggar makes a business of eating without working, deserves honorable mention. It is that unique institution, the sacred cow. We have passed a dozen of them. Yonder goes one, strolling casually and mooingly, in the path of motor and pedestrian, eating from shop fronts as it will, while the bedeviled shopkeeper, with clasped hands, devoutly prays it to take its honored meal from his neighbor.

One day at the luncheon hour at Firpo's, the Calcutta Sherry's, a sacred gray Brahmany bull, purchased by some pious Hindu to gain credit of heaven and turned loose to live on the town, crashed the swing door, and a phalanx of waiters had to push back tables and chairs to the walls and form a shifting

Maginot Line against its slobbering and investigating tongue, till it chose to stalk majestically to the street again.

Assemble all the cows on earth into a single herd and every third one will have come from India. There are two hundred millions of them. And they are not to be interfered with. They are above the law. To kill a cow intentionally is a more heinous crime than to murder a man, or ten men. In the old days it was a capital offense to kill one by accident, and even now it means jail at hard labor for six years. When your Rajput chauffeur, at a fifty-mile clip along a country road, suddenly jams on the emergency brake, you know it is not a mere beggar under the fender but a cow a mile ahead. At a quarter of a mile he comes from snail's pace to full stop and waits till it decides loftily to pass. In towns and cities the sacred cow monopolizes street and pavement. If it is a case of traffic or cow, the cow wins, hoofs down.

It is natural, perhaps, that the Hindus should revere the animal whose milk is their daily sustenance, its dung their household fuel and its urine their medicinal drink. But their Scripture did not make it sacred. Its holiness derives only from the Sacred Law. But that no Hindu, even the most ardent social reformer, dares flout.

There are many other animals in India which owe their daily provender to religion. Monkeys are in many sections sacred, and monkeys will eat anything. In Rajputana the peafowl is sacred to the tune of many thousands of tons of grain every year. Even that loathsome plague-carrier, the rat, is holy to some sects and may no more be killed than the swarming pigeons. Rats and wild pigs account for the loss of ten million tons of grain annually. The pig has no halo of sanctity anywhere, but he does his best without it. Someone has said that the pigs eat their way through India instead of Indians eating their way through pig.

Sacred or profane, the orthodox Hindu may take no animal life. The Allahabad Institute of Agriculture estimates that from a tenth to a fifth of the combined crops of the country are de-

stroyed by birds and other animals which he may not kill to save his own life.

In the roadway just ahead, wielding his coarse twig broom, is a "sweeper," and in his train two young girls, in filthy raiment and silver anklets, are scooping up wet cow-dung with their bare hands and tossing it into shallow trays which they balance on their shoulders. They will take their burdens to the unspeakable mud hut they call home in some noisome slum on the city's outskirts, where in its single room, occupied also by a goat and a few scrawny chickens, their father sits all day cobbling the coarse hide shoes, turned up at the toes, which the poorest Moslems wear. They will slap the sticky dung, handful by handful, against the outer wall, to cling till it is sun-dried. The flattened shell-shaped cakes are the household fuel, and what is left over can be sold for a copper or two.

These people belong to India's out-caste Untouchables, hopeless, hapless, abject, pitiable. They number between a third and a half the population of these United States. They are shunned by all decent people, sweepers, slaughterers, leather workers, followers of every filthy trade, poverty-ridden, eaters of offal and dead beasts. Every city, town and village, every countryside, has them. They may live only in a certain quarter, or in certain streets. In the villages they may not enter the temple or use the common well on the square. Their children must sit in a special corner of the common school, if there is one. They may not marry out of their class. In south India, in Tamil land, one class of Untouchables may go out only at night: the very sight of them is defiling.

Old Japan had its corresponding class in the *Éta*. The so-called "Restoration" of 1868 did away with their disabilities by law and they were merged with the population. But the *Éta* were never numbered by millions as the Untouchables are, nor were they held in the bond of a religious sanction. The problem is by no means as easy in India.

The condition of the Untouchables, thanks to the missionaries, has been bettering during the past few decades. The Christian,

whether white or brown, you and I and the Viceroy and the native convert, all alike, from the Hindu standpoint are outcaste. If the skirt-hem even of the Vicereine, walking along a country road, chances to brush the foot of a Hindu ditch-digger eating his noonday snack by the wayside, she may see him throw his bowlful of rice uneaten into the mud. But in general, and in the cities and towns, these extremes of caste observance are going by the board. It is impossible to classify either the well-washed, well-fed, well-clothed and well-housed missionary, or the native convert who partakes of his dignity and prosperity, with the frowzy and frequently lousy Untouchable. The convert—there are six million of them—may be counted casteless, but he ceases for all practical purposes to be outcast.

Yet even with this steady increment change comes slowly. Caste is a hereditary instinct, an ingrained habit, hard as a diamond, unyielding, infinitely stubborn.

To the Untouchables of the abyss can it matter a brass *barabec* what government rules them? It is their own blood and their own religion that oppress them, not the British. Their lot is hard enough here in the city, which holds many of their kind, and misery loves company. In the villages, where there is not the solace of variety, it is worse.

The knot of men boarding the tram yonder are Moslems. The beard of the tallest is dyed with henna. He may not dye it black, for the Prophet's beard was red.

The world's largest Mohammedan mosque is in India. It is the great Jamu Musjid in Delhi, the old Mogul capital, Shah Jehan's profligate gift to Moslem posterity. Five thousand laborers spent fourteen sweaty years building its gigantic domes and lofty minarets and the forty steps on three sides by which one mounts to its open court. I have seen ten thousand turbaned heads clustered in its Marble Court and Chamber of Prayer, and heard as many voices syllabbling the name of Allah the Compassionate.

Twenty-five years from now India will have a hundred and thirty million Moslems, ninety millions in British India, not

counting the Native States. A Moslem for every three Hindus. Their stronghold is in the northwest, but you find them in every section, and they are of every variety, from that Indian Croesus, the Nizam of Hyderabad, greatest of the Native States, to the Moplah seafarer, descendant of Arab traders, and notorious in Malabar for his bloody fanaticism.

In the Canadian Yukon country, where the White River flows into the darker stream, the ink-black and milk-white race side by side for miles before the current begins to show gray. The stream of Hindu and Moslem life in India has run thus, a two-color ribbon, for a thousand years and has not merged. The Moslem eats meat. He is taller and stronger, more virile and dynamic. Islam's creed is that of the conqueror, and he is aggressive. The Hindu is a vegetarian. He is slighter, less active and imaginative, contemplative rather than self-assertive. The Hindu worships the cow, the Moslem eats it. India's best poets are Moslems, its best businessmen Hindus. Each regards the other with bitterness and contempt. There has been almost no mingling of blood and little social approach. If you laid me a wager as to whether the Hindu hates the Moslem worse than the Moslem hates the Hindu, we would both win. When the fly blights the Moslem's tobacco crop, he blames it on the Hindu, and the Hindu blames everything, even the weather, on the Moslem.

There are two things that make to soften the Hindu-Moslem aversion. One is the railroad, the other is the factory.

In India everybody travels, for the Indian has an urge, that is like the craving for food, to change his base. The poor go third class and third-class tickets are unbelievably cheap.

At all stations Moslem and Hindu eat in separate restaurants and drink from separate water spigots, plainly marked, but on the train you can see them eating together without any scruples. How can one make such distinction in a railway coach where everything is as higgledy-piggledy as Donnybrook Fair? One would think it would be a tiresome business to hate as hard and as long as they have hated one another. Perhaps they find it a

relief to take a breather between rounds. After today's lay-off they may be able to hate harder tomorrow. But during the journey, by common consent, the chip is off the shoulder. That makes it seem almost possible that someday the hatred will have vanished, though that is still a long, long way off.

The factories accomplish the same thing in a more limited but quite as effective way. With men who handle the same machine, sit side by side on the same work bench, and have a common lunch hour, propinquity does the work. An American engineer who was setting up a steel rolling mill in central India a few years ago told me that during the first six months there had been a lot of trouble between his Hindu and Moslem workmen and that he had finally solved it in this fashion. He informed them all that the next time a row occurred each side should choose a champion and the pair should fight it out before the whole outfit with bare hands. The idea was approved with acclamation. In the year following he had had only two of these exhibitions and now the two factions got along perfectly well together.

But it takes more than a drop here and there to tinge the ocean. Today, in 1943, the Hindu-Moslem antipathy hangs over India's deceptive tranquillity like a black thundercloud, with hate-lightning licking its edges. The storm may burst at any time. It may be at the Moslem Feast of Mohurram, where the half-naked ecstatic devotees lacerate their bodies with knives and spiked chains to the outrage of the Hindus and the glory of the Prophet's sons, slain in the wars. Or at one of the larger villages when a Hindu procession, with cymbals and banging tom-toms, leads its course past a mosque during the prayer hour, and its Moslems in return sally to the temple and throw a fresh-slaughtered haunch of beef over the wall into the courtyard, with the bloody riot which follows.

In India's hurly-burly of races, tongues and religions, one sees in crude nakedness the leftovers and shag ends of outworn systems that will fit into no coherent pattern, a hundred unassimilable crossbreeds, two opposed and irreconcilable cultures



warring with one another, a mass population sunk in a poverty that the West can hardly conceive.

No city will show you this poverty. To see it you must go to the villages that spatter the gray, formless plains. There are six hundred and eighty-four thousand of them. To many no railroad or main highway penetrates. Schools have not reached them, nor will they for many generations. Poverty and illiteracy go hand in hand and their people live in dense ignorance of the elemental laws of decency and health.

There is no precedent for dealing with conditions like these, which in India antedate recorded history. If British India spent as much on education per head as England does, it would take four billion dollars annually, six times the total revenue of the country.

Before I ever visited India I used to wonder how it was that in the better part of a century of rule Great Britain had not solved India's crying problems. Ten thousand miles away they did not look unsurmountable.

Neither does Mt. Everest from Darjeeling. But just go there and try to climb it.

## Chapter Four

### OUTSIDE THE BRITISH BOUNDS

WHEN the British Government took possession, the territories held by the East India Company by conquest and purchase came under its complete control. Over the rest, the Native States, it assumed only such partial jurisdiction as the Company had gained by conveniently elastic "understandings" with native rulers. Its new Indian Government made these into legal treaties, each differing from the others according to the particular State's condition and circumstances. Some of these States, when their rulers proved incapable, or died without clear issue and a war of succession loomed which promised prolonged disorder, were merged with British India. Peace was decreed between the Treaty States, with the Indian Government umpire in irreconcilable disputes. Many of the smaller States came into this arrangement at their own request, thanking their lucky stars for protection and security at last.

Thus all were drawn into the same orbit of control, though the measure of that control was necessarily varied and has been many times modified.

Today, in 1943, these Native States occupy a principal place in all the Nationalist plans for Free India. For when the National Congress Party proposes to take over from the British, they do not mean merely British India: they mean also the vast area ruled by the maharajas, equal to nearly half of all India outside of Burma, and with a population half that of these United States. To the Nationalist, "When the British go" is like saying in America, "When I get that raise at the office"—which must certainly be soon. Practically every Nationalist I know, either in India or America, with his mental picture of British regiments stacking arms in the Bombay *maidan* and dejectedly boarding transports for Southampton, cherishes its companion piece showing all the maharajas, down to the littlest hill king, packing their trunks for foreign parts and turning

over the keys of their treasure vaults to the President of the new Indian Republic.

"We have declared war on the princes," says the Nationalist. "But for the protection of the British they would be out of India now, and they know it." The Nationalistic Congress seems nowadays to consider every move toward federation a conspiracy between Great Britain and the jackal maharajas against Indian unity and independence. The princes, it says, have "hitched their wagon to the chariot of imperialism": both have had their day and will vanish together.

To Jawaharlal Nehru, to whom Young India's masses look as to their future leader, they are all in the same basket, of decadent habit, callous to their subjects, resisting to the last reforms long overdue. Those subjects are hopelessly backward, "more backward even than the inhabitants of British India and well known for their semifeudal conditions." Nehru sees this as one more result of the baleful British rule. When Britain assumes direct control over an Indian State "it leads to a tightening up of all the feudal and autocratic bonds," of which the British administration "takes full advantage to tighten their hold on the people." But one must allow a wide discount for Nehru's personal equation.

The "Freedom Now" drive does not seriously discuss the States, their status, rights (if any), responsibilities or interests. There seems a tacit agreement among young Indian speakers in America to call their rulers "playboys" and let it go at that. As for the areas they rule, it is implied that they will naturally fall into the *olla podrida* and that their populations, whether Hindu, Moslem or mixed, will joyfully embrace the new democracy. We are told of India's prosperity and happiness before the British came, when it had only native rulers. Have the maharajas so degenerated that the people of the States now find them as bad as the British, and are just as anxious to be rid of them?

They rule a quarter of India's people. Do that quarter want to be taken over by the new India, any more than the old India

wanted to be taken over by the British? Should they have no say about it? How has the Congress acquired the right it asserts to speak for them? If Great Britain abandoned India, as it is now constituted, and the new Nationalist government took over the State (say) of Kashmir, which is bigger than England and Scotland, or of Hyderabad, which is bigger than Rumania, without its consent, in what would that differ from Hitler's rape of Austria? He had exactly as much right in the premises.

And what about England's responsibilities? Travancore, with whose Maharaja the East India Company made its first treaty in the early eighteenth century, includes Native States whose dynasties date back to a time when the ancient Britons were painting themselves with woad. Cochin's Maharaja welcomed Vasco da Gama's coming in the first European ship to reach India. Indore, Baroda, Gwalior, were powerful independent States before the John Company existed. When Great Britain took over, Victoria solemnly declared its acceptance of the existing treaties and promised to "respect the Rights, Dignity and Honour of Native Princes as Our Own." The people of the States owe no allegiance whatever to the British crown. They are no more British subjects than Dutch. The British Government's control over their rulers is strictly limited. But it guaranteed those rulers their territorial integrity—just as it guaranteed the inviolability of Belgium before World War I—when it established its limited suzerainty. England went to war to prove that her guaranty to Belgium was no "scrap of paper"; does her honor mean less now to her than it did then?

The Congress Extremists have always had the tomahawk out for the princes. The word "maharaja" to them has suggested only pearls and dancing girls, processions of conch blowers and caparisoned elephants. To the Viceroy and the India Office in London, however, it has connoted serious treaties, diplomatic safeguards and imperial responsibilities that cannot be shuffled off. And to the neutral observer on this other side of the world any willy-nilly appropriation of their highnesses' estate and holdings seems a large order. For though they are not emperors

or kings they are ruling families, with vested rights which have to be considered whether the British go or stay.

There are five hundred and sixty-two Native States, but only two hundred and twenty-nine need be counted; most of the rest are only plantation size, insolvent and insignificant. The smallest is less than a square mile in area, the size of a dozen New York city blocks. But a number of the larger ones are bigger than the smaller States of Europe—Mysore, for example, is bigger than Greece. Many of them have existed for a dozen centuries.

With all of them the Indian Government, while keeping control over railways, post and telegraph, the manufacture of fire-arms and relations with foreign powers, has assumed as little jurisdiction over internal affairs as is compatible with a decently just and humane administration, which has proved to be very little indeed. Lord Curzon, Viceroy at the beginning of the century, who could never ride a horse without using the spur, and whose passion for perfection led him to prod the more backward smaller States till their cries of agony brought the greater princes to their rescue, once drafted a circular demanding that the native rulers ask permission before taking their trips to Europe, but the thing raised such a ruckus that it was hurriedly withdrawn, and the pendulum swung so far the other way that it has never yet come back to the perpendicular. The sovereigns of Hyderabad, Gwalior, Mysore and Travancore have "unrestrained" power to seize the property of their subjects without redress, and of life and death over them. But they do not use it.

Under its system of maintaining a British Resident in each state capital, the old autocratic rule that, had it continued in all its pristine irresponsibility, might well have made the rulers of the States the anachronism the Congress calls them, has gradually grown less rigid. Rulers are encouraged to ask the Indian Government for the aid of British experts when one of their departments is in a tangle. Twenty have British prime ministers of their own choosing. The old ruler administered with the help of his Durbar [Council], that is his ministers, priests, and the chiefs of his castes and guilds. The Indian Government

in these days furnishes the good counsel needed. As to neglect of the subjects' good, refusal to accept the humanitarian outlook of modern Western rulers, or overexpenditure on dissipations that afflict the people, the cold and fishy eye of the Resident must be a wholesome deterrent. In practice that is how it works out.

It is seldom nowadays that a native ruler, however autocratic by inherited disposition, kicks over the traces, and when it happens he is apt to spend his future leisure regretting it in a distant country. As when one of the Moslem maharajas reprieved and took into his *zenana* a lovely young wife under sentence of death for poisoning her husband. Even such rare courage did not save his throne for him.

When the Indian Government cracks down it does so with a vengeance. It even arrested the predecessor of the present Gaekwar of Baroda on the charge of trying to poison the British Resident, and tried him in a court half Indian and half British. Though the Indian half cleared him, his administration had been such an outrageous one that the vote of the British half was counted sufficient and he was deposed.

A late ruler of Alwar—the third to be dethroned—used to travel about Europe in railway coaches that he had had stripped of every fragment of leather, at the State's expense, so that no hide of a dead beast should pollute his purity. That gilded savage died five years ago, an exile in Paris, cruel, arrogant and sadist to the last.

By this time native rulers have learned by experience and observation that only good administration will keep their thrones under them. Nowadays splurging and oppression are the exceptions that prove the rule.

The gorgeous jewels which connoisseurs talk of with bated breath, the rubies the size of billiard balls and the pearls that should give any oyster that ever lived a case of indigestion, are to be seen, at a discreet distance, on state occasions. But the famous ruby necklace of Jaipur which was worn by the Emperor Baber and his grandson Akbar the Great, Gwalior's nine-row

collar of pearls the size of thrush's eggs, Patiala's diamond necklace that is valued at over a million pounds sterling, and his rope of emeralds as large as bouillon spoons, Kapurthala's belt buckle carved from what is said to be the world's biggest topaz—these are oftener heard of than seen.

No doubt some of the storied hoards exist. I know a gem expert in London who was called out to Hyderabad three years ago to catalogue the Maharaja's jewels and only recently finished the job. Those I have seen look all right to me, though I have known skeptics to refer to them as "stage jewelry." True or phony, they are valuable assets to their owners. But the maharaja who gives the thousand-pound dinners in London "for which a thousand peasants must pay in blood and tears" (an exact quotation), if he ever existed, is at this date of writing as extinct as the dodo.

If a maharaja is desirous of passing on his rule to his son, he must care for his people and treat them justly. He will have no trouble with the Indian Government if he does the best he can. The son, meanwhile, is encouraged to go abroad for his education, preferably, of course, to England, where he may see at first hand the working of democratic parliamentary institutions at the fountainhead. Some have even been educated in the United States. If the princely scion acquires nothing else at Oxford he comes back with an irreproachable accent and a praiseworthy inclination to chew betel nut, if at all, behind closed doors.

The young Nationalist of the indignant mass meeting for "India's freedom" in Sioux City has many jibes for the maharajas' holidays in Paris and Newport. But in the days before the era of Herr Schicklgruber I have seen three ruling European monarchs, incognito, at the same baccarat table in the club at Monte Carlo. Their people did not begrudge them their vacations. And may there not be profit for the Indian people from some of Their Highnesses' trips abroad? Everybody in the State of Baroda knows that the late Gaekwar, *Doyen* of the princes and one of India's elder statesmen, got the idea of

the free meals which the school children of his State enjoy every day from an American pedagogue who was spending his sabbatical year in Paris.

Abroad or at home the maharajas furnish a good share of the Congress Nationalist's story-shrapnel. And one may gratefully acknowledge that some of their tales have greatly enlivened our fireside hours.

We remember reading how His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir, Sir Hari Singh, in his youth, figured as the "Mr. A." in the London exposé of a notorious badger game in the French capital and was bilked to the tune of an incredible number of pounds.

How another prince fell in love with his fascinating candy-shop girl as fatally as a man falling off the Washington monument, with monetary results that I have forgotten.

How the favorite pastime of one Maharaja of Indore was making Brahman dignitaries run the gauntlet while he took pot shots at them with a rifle. How his successor, Tukaji Rao, kept a dancing girl imprisoned in his *zenana* till she ran away, when his military officers traced her to Bombay, shot her new husband, a rich mill owner, dead, when she was driving with him on Malabar Hill, and would have kidnaped her but for some British officers who heard her screams. And how he later married Nancy Miller of Seattle.

How the Nizam of Hyderabad, supposedly the richest man in the world, drives about in a Buick of ancient vintage and is so "near" that New York's Hetty Green was a spendthrift beside him. How, with a half-million-dollar diamond on his desk as a paperweight, he drinks half the Maharanee's lemon squash to save a lemon.

These tales are merely highlights in the Nationalists' general smear campaign that spreads abroad the ubiquitous sneer at the princes' "divine right" (which every legitimate ruling dynasty left in the world is used to nowadays), ridiculing their extravagance and love of display, and charging them with conspiring in their own interests with the British Government to hold India



in perpetual serfdom. It is difficult to keep one's balance, as to-day they may be attacking Great Britain for permitting misrule in the Native States, and tomorrow just as vehemently denouncing its high-handed and brutal intervention in those same territories.

Personality counts for much more in India than in the West. Boulanger, France's "Man on Horseback," might not have failed in India. It is the intimate personal ruler, not the cut-and-dried bureaucrat, that it understands. Even when he is fickle or tyrannical, the Indian at heart seems to prefer him. He likes a ruler before whose council he can throw down his turban and plead his own cause. He loves to see the Maharaja of Travancore feast five thousand Brahmans every day at the temple gate, and to watch the Thakore of Gondal weighed in gold at his jubilee and the coin given to the poor. The great Moguls did this each year on their birthdays and the Aga Khan does so now. Largess is as Indian as the sacred cow.

In the Indian's affections the cold and impersonal bureaucracy will never supplant the personal ruler, who possesses to him something of the element of deity. This is perhaps the main reason why the turmoil of the Congress has not penetrated the States, why Civil Disobedience, Nonco-operation and all the rest of the *Satyagraha* series have made little progress. There you will not hear any callow youths mouthing boycott tocsins on the street, or see sari'd young *politiciennes* picketing the liquor shops. For that you will have to go to the intelligentsia cohorts of Calcutta or Bombay.

In British India both Hindus and Moslems (excepting always the Nationalists) regard the rulers of the States, Hindu and Moslem, with respect and often with liking. It is only the Nationalist politician who hates them, because their people decline to join the Congress and "help oust the English." For a thousand years the maharajas have held down Islam's encroachments and preserved the Hindu culture, yet now the Congress, which is overwhelmingly Hindu, counts them good only as a possible club to beat the British with.

The princes to be sure are pro-British. They know which side of their bread is buttered. In the war of 1914 they offered practically all their resources, men and money, to the Allied cause. Eighteen of them served with the colors. They will never willingly entrust their destinies to the Nationalists.

No, the more one considers it, the less likely Their Highnesses seem to be booted without a by-your-leave out of their dynastic tenures. "With their loss," said Curzon, "if ever they be allowed to disappear, Indian society would go to pieces like a dismayed vessel in a storm."

And Curzon threw few bouquets.

## *Chapter Five*

### THEIR HIGHNESSES

THE India of the princes is a vivid and varied tapestry. Some of its rulers are old-fashioned enough to cling to the old ways. They do not traipse about Europe or approve of Western education for their scions, though they are not blind to the kind of improvement the West offers. Others are ultra-modern, and this is by far the greater number. Still others are a baffling combination of old and new, Indian and Western. There is a good deal to be said of States in each of these categories. Those of their rulers whom I have known are very far from being either playboys or barnacles.

Among the old-fashioned ones is His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad. The word "Nizam" is properly the name of the country too. The title "Exalted" was given him by the British Government as a reward for his proclamations urging loyalty to the Crown during World War I. These were of great value in keeping his Moslems up to the mark, for though Islam is the state religion, ninety per cent of the people are Hindus. Ten years ago Hyderabad had a population of fifteen million, making it the most populous of all. Most of the country is a vast rolling plateau, high enough not to be cursed with the dreadful monsoon of the northern plains. It used to be celebrated for its horses before cavalry became a back number, and now is known to travelers especially for its ancient rock temples and monasteries of Ajanta, carved from the solid rock, as in Petra in the desert of Transjordan, the "rose-red city half as old as time." As for me I give the palm to Ajanta, with its fifth-century Buddhist frescoes.

The Maharaja, with a revenue of seven million pounds and a civil list of a thousand pounds a day, is almost a hermit. Since King George's Jubilee in 1935, which made such functions smart in India, his celebrations have been close copies, but he has never been in Europe. The foreign correspondent who even

attempts to interview him should receive the Victoria Cross. I have seen him only once, driving from the palace gate in his faded motor and green-trimmed uniform, with another car following which looked like a Rolls-Royce and presumably carried an aide-de-camp, on his daily visit to his mother who was ill and to whom he is devoted. He neither rides nor shoots nor golfs. His chief amusement is writing Persian love lyrics.

He is one of the great leaders of Moslem India. He married his eldest son to the daughter of Mohammed VI, Turkey's last sultan and khalif, and a younger son to his niece. He is the reputed owner of the "Divine Shawl of the Prophet" and a *zenana* of two hundred houris. He gave thirty-five thousand pounds for the building of a mosque in London. And he never forgets that till 1850 a British officer, when admitted to the presence of the Nizam of Hyderabad, had to take off his shoes.

Yet behind this odd mask of seclusion and parsimony must be an acute and tireless brain and a genius for organization. The capital is the most aristocratic center of Islam in India. One can throw a stone anywhere in the street and give odds that it will hit an Oxford or a Cambridge man. The State has its own army, now being modernized, its own currency, its own university, and is serviced by a web of railroads managed by British experts. It has coal fields and hydroelectric works.

And more admirable than all these, it has wiped out the unhappy color line that has been so strenuously preserved throughout British India. The State's prime minister, when Great Britain took over, paid the greater part of the cost of the British Officers Club at Secunderabad, close to the capital, on the condition that a certain number of the Nizam's nobles and high officers of state be made members. Today it is one of the few places I have seen in India where the two races meet on equal terms socially.

Another sovereign of the old-time sort is the Maharaj Rana of Dholpur, who has the longest princely appellation I have met. He is Lieutenant Colonel His Highness Rais-ud-Daula Sipedarul Mulk Saramad Rajhai Hind Maharajadluraj Sri

Sawai Maharaj Rana Sir Udai Bhan Singh Lokendra Bahadur Dilar Jang Jai Dev, K.C.S.I., K.C.V.O., and a string of Indian titles which it requires three deep breaths to negotiate. He wears a collar covered with pearls like iridescent wren's eggs and kills nothing, not even tigers and cobras. He is his country's father and its earthly god. He takes no joy trips to Europe. Every rupee of his revenue goes back to his people's land, in agricultural and irrigation projects.

The ultramodern maharajas are the most numerous. The present ruler of Indore, the son of Nancy Miller's ex-Maharaja, is one of them. He married and divorced two Americans, the first a trained nurse, and the second a railroad stewardess. His third wife, recently acquired, was Mrs. Frank A. Crane of Los Angeles. He has two estates in California, where he spends much time, and his palace in Indore is fitted in ultra-American fashion, with a cocktail bar and every gadget one can think of.

His father, who seems rather to enjoy being deposed than otherwise, his flurry with the one-time dancing girl over, took for his Seattle bride a chateau in St. Germain and settled down. One used to see them in the more sedate Paris night clubs happily holding hands under the table. They now live with their daughters in his palace in Indore, which is so large they take an automobile from their apartments to the state dining room in another wing. I found Nancy active in the state charities and unaffectedly liked. She wears the sari, which is most becoming to her slim figure. When I last saw her, her mother was visiting her.

The Maharaja of Kashmir, largest in area of all the States, is also a modernist. Kashmir holds the famous "Happy Valley" where the tourists, with hundreds of British soldiers on summer leave and foreign residents of India, go to escape the summer heat of the plains, while living cheaply and luxuriously, if one is charitable toward dirt and immune to flies, in a houseboat.

It is a valley that at five thousand feet has poppy fields and tobacco patches that remind one of Kentucky and Virginia. Rimmed with its snow-capped mountains, with its forested slopes

thick with the giant *chenár* trees the homesick Mogul conquerors brought as saplings from Persia and the deodars that Kipling loved, its green lagoons and floating islands where the Kashmiri native grows his melons and cucumbers, its Dal Lake bordered with the gorgeous formal gardens the Great Emperor Shah Jehan loved to build, and mirroring the sun-gilded peaks and sulphur-colored sunsets tipped with coral, I know of no spot on this drab old earth to compare with it for sheer loveliness.

It is the sportsman's heaven. The Dal Lake houseboat of our nearest neighbor sported rugs made of the hides of an ibex and a leopard he had shot one morning before breakfast on the hillside a mile away. Only a miracle can achieve a shooting permit, however, for the Maharaja, though ninety per cent of the Kashmiri are Moslems, is himself a Hindu, and orthodox Hindus do not approve of killing animals. The Brahmans once made him believe that the *nilghai*, India's big blue antelope, is a cross between deer and cow, and he prohibited killing it till the beasts overran a province or two, and the Brahmans, to save their crops, had to reverse their ruling—much to the delight of the Moslems, who have been jibing at them ever since. In one section the wild (sacred) cattle in one of the state forests multiplied so that they almost produced a famine, till the Resident prevailed on him to stockade them.

The Maharaja gives very English and exclusive cocktail parties on the lawn of the palace overlooking the lake, where at dusk illuminated Venetian fountains throw bars of colored light across the grass, and his Maharanee, whom he married for love, is frequently seen at the Red Cross Headquarters. She is one of the most beautiful women in India, with a secret-keeping smile like the Mona Lisa's, and is said never to wear the same sari twice. She takes an occasional trip to Paris with him, but spends most of her time at home, busy with her charitable work. He too is forward-looking. He has a real army formed on the British model. He has become a leading figure in the Chamber of Princes and is beyond doubt one of the group of native

rulers who will have most to do with molding India's future.

He occasionally remembers that he is a ruler: when his dentist (a graduate of an American dental college) advised him to have his wisdom teeth out by gas, he called in all his aides-de-camp and household officers and had them take the gas first before he tried it. And I, with the rest of the townfolk, have been irked of a morning to find the capital's main thoroughfare roped off, so that I had to go a mile around, because he proposed at some indefinite time that afternoon to drive along it.

But to balance these occasional prerogatives, from time to time he gives the city a good show of fireworks, as at the annual Hindu festival of the *Dussurah*. The word means "Ten Days," which is the period of its celebration, at full moon in the autumn, when the forty-foot effigies of the Ogre-King Ravana, with his brother and son, are burned, because they stole the chaste wife of the demigod Rama and held her captive in Ceylon till she was rescued by the help of the monkey god Hanumán.

In Kashmir each new viceroy, on his first visit to the State, is received with a splendid procession of boats on the Jhelum River which flows between high banks through the center of Srinagar, its capital, led by four great barges, decorated with brocades and flowers, each rowed by sixty white-clad oarsmen. This ceremony has come down from the Mogul emperors, who made the "Happy Valley" their summer playground.

Sir Hari's wild-oat sowing in the guise of "Mr. A." was so long ago that only the Nationalists remember it, and when they campaign in Kashmir they do not make it the text of their open-air speeches.

Baroda State is one of the "Big Five," and its Gaekwar has a salute of twenty-one guns. His own palace salutes him with a salvo fired from a steel-bored cannon of solid gold. The word "Gaekwar" means "Defender of Cows," corresponding, in a country where the cow is religion typified, to the British "Defender of the Faith."

His predecessor, his grandfather, ruled for more than fifty years and made the State one of the best administered in India.

His Maharanee did not practice *purdah*, and worked hand in hand with her husband. She presided over the first All-India Women's Conference and is honorary president of the National Council of Women. Their daughter had the gumption to make what from Indian standards was virtually a runaway marriage with the present Maharaja of Cooch Bihar. She is well known in London and the hunting counties.

Gwalior, the fourth of the Big Five, is one of India's most modern States. It has sixteen hundred educational institutions with nearly ninety thousand pupils, and its own railway system. Its jungles are famous. In one of them Lord Hardinge, when Viceroy, is said to have bagged four tigers in one day from elephant-back.

The late Maharaja of Patiala, the chief Sikh state and the largest of the Punjab, who died three years ago, gets one of the blackest marks from the Nationalists, possibly as reward for his munificent contributions to the British cause in World War I, for twenty-eight thousand of his troops fought gallantly at Gallipoli, and in Egypt and Mesopotamia, and he himself was a member of the Imperial War Cabinet. They say he has been accused of every crime in the calendar, from murder to misappropriation of public funds. They carry the list about with them—you cannot argue with one long before he will spring it on you. I have heard it read so often I almost know it by heart. They do not tell you that when one viceroy was led to look into the matter and put His Highness' principal accusers on the carpet, the stories one by one folded up. The nearest squeak he had was on the charge of torturing live animals: it seemed that, being a dog fancier, he maintained a dog hospital of three wards, with an operating room attached for canine surgery.

He was a sportsman, cricketeer and motorist, and noted for his parks, which he kept full of rare animals and birds. He represented the princes at the League of Nations and was Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes.

Another ultramodernist was the late Maharaja of Bikanir, who represented India at the Imperial War Conference of 1917,



the Peace Conference, the League of Nations and the Round Table. From his private purse he maintained a relief fund for the support of the peasants in periods of crop failure. The capital is fitted out with girls' schools and Boy Scouts, and is about the politest city I know. Even its fawn-colored camels that go about the streets and drag the state artillery are well-mannered if not friendly—I never knew a camel to be that. They are the only ones I ever patted that did not try to nip me.

The Maharaja was known in England for the fine grouse shooting he maintained. Some sportsman requited his hospitality by dubbing him "King of Bikanir by the Grouse of God." But little of his revenue went for sport. It went instead into irrigation projects, which his State sorely needs. One of his canals irrigates an area of more than a half million acres.

The ruler of Kapurthala, as elegant and fastidious as an education at Oxford and wide travel suggest, you may have seen at New York's World Fair or the fair at San Francisco, at Palm Beach or Beverly Hills. He is fond of travel, and on one huge wall of his palace, in mosaic, is a map of the world, with a red line tracing his journeys. He is a Sikh, but not a strict one, for he cuts his hair and shaves his beard.

His son, Captain Amarjit Singh, once showed me his own "den" in one of the palace wings, with walls covered with signed photographs, many of them from Hollywood, which he visited a few years ago. Over his desk, in a gold frame, hung a portrait which I recognized. It was that of his beautiful Spanish mother who, before her marriage, had been Madrid's most famous dancer. The Maharaja had brought her, his Maharanee, to Rome for a season when I was at the embassy there, when the captain was two years old.

Kapurthala City as a model capital is as well known in India as the Maharaja's sugar mills, two of which are the largest in the world. The Nationalists may fume at the mention of his celebrated Carpet of Jewels, patterned in emeralds, diamonds and rubies, on a background of pearls (this is another gem exhibit which is beyond question genuine), but they should find

it hard to cavil at the prosperity of his subjects. Throughout the State primary education is compulsory and free as the air, and schools that do not give Untouchable children all the privileges of caste children get no grants. Child-marriage is penalized.

The most interesting of the States are those which are a combination of old and new, of conservative and progressive. The late Maharaja of Mysore, the great Hindu state of southern India, who died three years ago, was orthodox and would not eat with Europeans or Americans. On his only visit to London he brought his own cooks and food and had two rooms in his hotel suite refitted in advance as temple and kitchen. His mother, a dominating woman, lived in strict *purdah*, veiled from the sight of all men save those of her family; when the dentist pulled her tooth it had to be done through a slit in a curtain. The Maharaja was deeply religious and a famous Sanskrit scholar, with a propensity for making pilgrimages to Himalayan holy places.

Yet he had another side that was fiercely modern. He rode to hounds and played polo. He beat the Duke of Windsor at squash when the Duke visited India as Prince of Wales. He loved tiger hunting. He put up the United Artists' aggregation in palatial style at one of his jungle guest-houses while they were filming Korda's *Elephant Boy*, and loaned me seven of his elephants three years ago for an outing in the same jungle. He was a brilliant violinist and gave musical evenings, with organ recitals, at the palace.

Moreover he was an able administrator. He gave his government an elected representative assembly and a legislative council with a majority of non-official members, which discusses all legislation in advance and is responsible for the State budget. He made a Briton head of his Police Department, because it has become a legend in India that a Briton cannot be bribed. Illiteracy in the state is almost at the vanishing point: he used to pay from his own purse for schools to which his Department of Education turned a deaf ear. He had for prime minister one of India's brainiest organizers, Sir Mirza Ismail, a Moslem, though

he himself was Hindu. Between them they made Mysore a model state.

I have never seen so spic-and-span or so beggarless a place as the capital, Mysore City. It is the dream of every British officer of the Indian Army, when he retires, to go back to England to live; but after a year there he is apt to wake up and start back to buy that house in Bangalore (Mysore's largest town) where you may find him now sipping a cool drink on the piazza, in a climate the nearest to southern California's endless sunshine that I have ever known.

The most spectacular pageant of India is the *Dussurah*, which in Mysore is celebrated only once every fifteen years. Foreigners come from far countries to witness it. At its opening the Maharaja goes in processional, with his favorite state elephant wonderfully caparisoned and the Arab stallion that is the sacred horse of Mysore, in jeweled harness and with a curled tail-do, surrounded by his chief ministers and officers of his military, to the hill temple which is the seat of the ancestral spirit of his line, his nth great-grandmother, who confers godhead upon him. For eight days he may not be touched, seen or spoken to by any mortal. On the ninth the godhead fades, he is a human ruler again, who can be bathed and shaved, and returns incensed and garlanded, followed by his rejoicing people, whose thousands of tents have dotted the valley below, to his capital.

In the evening the palace outlines are pricked out with thirty thousand electric lights, and he holds High Durbar there. To this function foreigners of distinction are honored with invitations. The evening closes with a show of wrestling and gymnastics in the courtyard, and each lady on her departure carries away a bouquet from the palace conservatories.

Its high literacy, one would think, should make Mysore a fruitful field for Congress agitation, but as a matter of fact I never saw a Gandhi cap there. Perhaps the people are satisfied with the elective legislative system they have already.

The late ruler of Jaipur, whose line has been there since the eleventh century, was old-fashioned. When he went to England

for the coronation of King Edward he carried enough magnums of Ganges water to last him for a half year. He prohibited the killing within ten miles of Jaipur City of any animal except the goat. The goat had to take his chance, because at the near-by abandoned city of Amber, beloved of the tourist, which is perhaps India's most sensational ruin, is a temple to Kali, the blood-drinking spouse of the god Siva. There the Thugs used to bring her portion of the booty of their victims. Amber is dead, but the temple is still very much alive, and now that strangled travelers are no more available a goat is the most pleasing sacrifice to her.

The present Maharaja, however, who is thirtyish, is his predecessor's opposite. He spent a year at Woolwich, is a daring flier and an international polo player. He raises thoroughbred horses and has two hundred in his stables, each with its individual shower and electric fan. They are the only animals I have seen in India which are treated with more consideration than the cows. He is a crack shot and has more tigers to his credit than any man I know except one, and that is Chief Forester Smythies of the closed kingdom of Nepal, on the Tibetan border, where the tigers are so thick they hunt each other. The plain just beyond Amber is the Maharaja's favorite reach for tiger and panther. The Resident spoiled a luncheon for me by telling me he had often seen six-foot black panthers sunning themselves on the ruined walls along the road I had taken on foot an hour before.

A unique function in Jaipur is the annual White Durbar, which is held on the palace roof, on a night of full moon. The Maharaja wears white brocade sprayed with diamonds and all the guests are in gleaming white. The roof is turned into a garden for the occasion.

His Highness is as keen as mustard on his job, which is developing the State's new system of hospitals. Jaipur, which is about twice the size of Massachusetts, leads all the Rajput States in education. It has fifty thousand pupils in its schools and colleges. The Maharaja personally supervises his Departments

of Justice, Health and Agriculture, and his council has three British members. He has recently acquired as his prime minister Sir Mirza Ismail, who did so much for Mysore State before the recent passing of its saintly ruler.

He is good to his poor. The festivities of his recent marriage to the Maharaj Kumari of Jodhpore which lasted seven days was a round week of feasting for them. Every evening the capital's main street, one hundred feet wide, was laid with white cloth covered with platters of all kinds of fruits and wedding delicacies, to be eaten on green leaves. What must such largess mean to the beggar whose dearest wish is that in his next incarnation he may be born one of the sleek hand-fed cows that you and I have to circle to get into our bank!

Nationalist agitators declared a week's closed shops in celebration of Gandhi's last birthday, but the State has no Congress Party. Wily old Sir Mirza merely told them to agitate all they wanted to, but let there be the smallest sign of riot or repression, and something would happen. It was probably the peace fullest strike India has ever seen. The Congress has not much look-in there.

Travancore, where legend says St. Thomas the Martyr made his first converts, is hard to classify. It is the most backward and the most advanced of all the States, at one time the most caste-ridden and the most literate, with coeducation, women teachers and even a woman magistrate. The *purdah* veil is unknown there. It has a native Salvation Army and one hundred and twenty newspapers and periodicals. In all India only fifteen per cent of the men and three per cent of the women are literate, but in Travancore half the men and one sixth of the women can read and write.

The real ruler of the state is the god Vishnu: the Maharaja is only his viceroy. And the rule descends in the female, not the male, line. For Travancore is one of those quaint communities known as matriarchies, and the heir of the present Maharaja is not his son but the son of his sister.

Most of the smaller states, for their size, are quite as forward-

looking as the big ones, though one seldom hears of them. One such is Nawanagar, whose Jam Sahib was His late Highness Ranjitsinhji, once known the world over as "Ranji." I knew him in London when he was playing his brilliant cricket, and saw him once in New York, where he liked to knock about the slums in corduroys seeing how the "lower classes" lived. He turned that liking to good account after the rule of Nawanagar fell to him, when he used to go disguised, *à la* Haroun al Rashid, through the countryside to overhear the complaints of the villagers. He found the state "a wild swamp full of wild asses" and made it a garden. He had his finger on every detail of his administration. But till his death ten years or so ago he kept his love for England, for his country place at Slough and his salmon reach in Ireland. Next to them he loved "Popsy," his tame parrot. He deserved the pyre of priceless sandalwood his people gave him.

One or two of the less important States have problems purely their own, which they deserve credit for solving. Jodhpur's desert side, for example, was the stronghold of the Thugs whom the British wiped out as a clan in the old Company days before the take-over. Their descendants of today are hereditary criminals, worse than the Pathán freebooters of the northwest frontier, and that is their bailiwick. With them outlawry has no bounds and murder is as common as nightfall. It is like the old Hole-in-the-Wall country of Wyoming which the Jesse James gang used as their hide-out two generations ago. Some of their hill-castle chiefs are still, like the robber barons of the Middle Ages in Europe, a tough problem for Jodhpur's government.

The above is a small part of what might be said to the credit and discredit of the Native States, and it seems plain, I think, that when we have made our addition and subtraction, the result is decidedly on the credit side.

The tag "playboy" belongs to no one of the maharajas of whom I know anything at all. As I see them they are a responsible and hard-working class of rulers. The bigger the States the more progressive they are and the better off are their people.

In some the standard of education and of living in general is materially higher than in British India. Mysore, Baroda, Indore, outlawed child-marriage long before British India did so. In all the larger States civil service is quite efficient. At least a dozen, among them some of the largest, like Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore, have made greater progress than has British India toward modernization. On the whole taxes are lighter and the burden of debt less heavy. That, perhaps, is one reason why the States have less crime.

Caste arrogance and Hindu-Moslem feeling in some of the States are of less force for dynastic reasons. Caste as a social arbiter loses some of its significance when ruler and court are of lower caste than subject, as in Baroda, one of the most advanced of all the States, whose Gaekwar is a Sudra, the lowest caste of all. Similarly there must be fewer communal disturbances in States like Kashmir, where a Hindu line rules a people predominantly Moslem, or Hyderabad where the contrary is the case.

## Chapter Six

### THE LEAVEN OF DISCONTENT

IN British India with the opening of the century a new spirit had begun to trouble the waters. The Indians were far from satisfied. Here and there a leader had risen to prominence through bristling attacks on England for her policy of *laissez faire*. She did not appreciate India's needs or deserts, they insisted. What the country should demand was a more representative government. The dissatisfaction had spread and gained momentum year by year, while the railroads pushed further and further and the telegraph unwound its thousands of leagues of the clicking wire.

The year 1885 had seen the formation of what is called the All-India National Congress, which met annually. It was a purely deliberative, not a legislative, body, and at first a true people's gathering. It was the brain child of an Englishman, one Allan Octavian Hume, a member of the civil service and a resident in India for thirty years. He had intended it as a safety valve to let off the steam he realized was gathering under the surface.

When he projected it the creeping fire of discontent which had inflamed India in the seventies under the most inept and martinetish of all its viceroys, Lord Lytton, had been still smoldering. In his younger days, under the pen name of "Owen Meredith," Lytton had perpetrated the famous *Lucile*, the poetic sob-epic so dear to the romantic hearts of our grandmothers, but poetry is perhaps not the best qualification for viceregal glory. Under his reign the police had grown corrupt and tyrannous. Indian magistrates had been forbidden to try European and American offenders. There had been an oppressive Arms Act. The native press had been muzzled by a Vernacular Press Act that Lord Gladstone, the old Prime Minister's son, who attended the Congress of 1887, called "a disgrace to the British Empire." The universities had been robbed of their independ-



ence. Even the right of public assembly had been denied the people.

The inevitable explosion had followed: riots in Bombay, seditious literature circulated underground, and a spate of robbed banks, looted bazaars and murdered officials. A group of Indians in Calcutta had even hatched a plot to rush the sentries of Government House, put Lytton on a steamer and send him back to England via the Cape. This with apparent confidence that in the rage of public anger they could pull it off! It took the next viceroy half his term to clear up the mess.

It was in this atmosphere that the "Congress" was organized. Hume had written to the group he had selected to consider his scheme, "If you cannot make a resolute struggle to secure greater freedom for yourselves and your country, then . . . India truly neither desires nor deserves any better government than it enjoys." But the idea of Home Rule had never entered his head, as he was later at passionate pains to explain to his critical fellow Englishmen when they almost ostracized him. The proposed assembly had seemed so harmless that Lord Dufferin, the then Viceroy, had given it his blessing, and even Ripon, the Secretary of State for India, had been decidedly receptive.

With the Congress' first session it seemed to have got a bit out of hand. Its circular announced that, if properly conducted, it would "constitute in a few years an unanswerable reply to the assertion that India is still wholly unfit for any form of representative institutions." To be sure no such "assertion" had ever been made officially: the India Office by nature and habit leans over backward in politeness. And it is incredible that any Secretary of State for India could have believed such a sweeping condemnation. But Hume's "resolute struggle to secure greater freedom" had been a signpost pointing the way to representative government, and it was as well to put it in the record. And in its deliberations, thus begun, the fledgling Congress showed no slightest hint of disloyalty.

On the contrary: one of its principal speakers was even fulsome. "By a merciful dispensation of Providence," he said,

"India, for centuries the victim of external aggression and plunder, of internal civil wars and general confusion, has been brought under the dominion of the great British Power. I need not tell you how that event introduced a great change in the destiny of the people, how the inestimable good that has flowed from it has been appreciated by them."

But the honey soon dribbled away. The radicals who flocked to the new organization which lifted them out of the street-corner soapbox class and furnished them a real rostrum, gained more and more influence. They soon began to infect and affect the crowd, which was inchoate and without leadership, and before long were calling the older and doubtful ones old fogies.

The systematized anti-British propaganda which began to be noticeable in the United States soon after the close of World War I, and at this writing is at its zenith, was an early creation of the Congress. It was given form by its Extremists and floated by the student intelligentsia. The stock iniquities of Britain were preached assiduously—debasing poverty, ruinous tariffs, one-sided civil service, an expensive and useless army, and all the rest.

There is no doubt that in those early days there was much truth in these charges. England looked on India as God's best gift to British manufacturers, providing both raw materials for their industries and a market to sell their products in. Yet it is to be remembered that almost to our own time the conditions complained of were as prevalent in England as in India. Humanitarianism is a plant of slow growth, and it has taken a long line of reformers to fit British legislation to the evolving human conscience and to ameliorate living conditions produced by poverty, ignorance, child-labor and all the evils of human selfishness.

Viscount Halifax, the British Ambassador (the Lord Irwin of his Indian viceroyship), in his Jonathan Peterson Lecture at New York's Town Hall last year, put it clearly when he said, "It is fair to remember that the standards of administration of the eighteenth century were not those of the nineteenth,

nor were these in their turn the standards of the twentieth—neither in India, nor, for that matter, anywhere else. . . . By the light of the standards of today we see plainly that, in the past, things have been done in the name of England which have brought that name no honor.”

To the Indian Nationalist of the modern forum, however, dates are of no significance: like the leopard, Great Britain has not changed a single spot. What the Extremist of the early Congress alleged fifty years ago is as true, if not more true, to him today.

“In her long rule,” he asks, “what has England done to relieve India’s poverty? Nothing. A huge percentage of the population remain alive by the skin of their teeth. When crops fail the peasant lives on bark. Even in years of plenty he is the serf of the moneylender.”

His dream is that with the self-rule he longs for India will return to that “Golden Age” of which Chitta Das, the great Bengali of the last generation, better known in the closing years of his life as “Deshbandhu” [Friend of the Country], penned his panegyrics. “We had corn in our granaries,” Das wrote. “Our tanks supplied us with fish, and our eyes were soothed and refreshed by the limpid blue of the sky and the green foliage of the trees. All day long the peasant toiled in the field. At eve, returning to his lamp-lit home, he sang the song of his heart.” That happy era is ended now. “The granaries are empty of their wealth. The kine are dry and give no milk, and the fields once so green are dry and parched with thirst.”

The Nationalist lays this deterioration at the door of the British. He does not recall that in fact, if not in poetry and panegyric, the Indian has always been poor, that he lived in extremest poverty not only in that boasted “Golden Age” but in the gorgeous time of the Mogul Empire as well. He does not suggest that the roots of much of India’s poverty have always been, and are now, in ignorance of agriculture, waste and reckless breeding, in extravagant festivals and dowries.

How can he shut his eyes to the colossal irrigation projects

Great Britain has developed since the seventies throughout the whole vast country? It has given it seventy-nine thousand miles of canals that water nearly thirty-two million acres in an irrigation system the largest in the world, supplying fourteen times the acreage irrigated by the United States. It has added to the cultivable area twenty million acres, an extent equal to France and Egypt. The total length of its channels, put together, would go twice around the earth. One single dam, the Lloyd of Madras, the largest in the British Empire, is larger than Egypt's stupendous Assuan Dam. It turns a river that used to empty into the Arabian Sea and makes it flow east into the Bay of Bengal. It irrigates two hundred thousand acres.

As for the extortionate moneylender, he is of the Nationalists' own race. He cannot be rooted out by legislation alone. Forty years ago Great Britain began the establishment of rural co-operative loan societies to checkmate the money shark. There are ninety thousand now in operation.

"Great Britain has consistently exploited India for her own commercial advantage," says the Nationalist. "Her tariffs have kept Indian manufactures out of England and forced her own manufactures on India."

That belongs to the past. For a generation India has been free to levy what duties it likes on all foreign goods imported, including British manufactures. It has made its own tariffs, that have again and again excluded British goods. The preference it gives to certain British imports is in exchange for like preference given by Great Britain to certain Indian imports to England, a *quid pro quo*. Normally each country is the other's largest customer. At present the balance of trade is enormously in India's favor.

"Taxes!" says the Nationalist. "The Indians are taxed twice as much as the people are taxed in England, ten times as much as under the Mogul emperors. Beside the exacting and oppressive land revenue they are taxed for essentials."

Here is the fact. During nearly two hundred years of the Mogul Empire the average annual tax was about sixty million

pounds sterling. And of this sum land revenue yielded about half. Forty personal taxes were levied in addition—on the peasant's religious assemblies, his wife, his cattle, his trees and even his hearth! In 1879 in British India the tax was only thirty-five million and the land revenue made up about half of that. And British India had an enormously greater population. The Native States, generally speaking, have kept pace with British India for the better. India today pays no sort of tax, direct or indirect, to Great Britain.

From the standpoint of capacity, even in these war times, India's taxation is comparatively light. Its financial arrangements with Great Britain relieve it of the full weight of war expenditure. The high rate of taxation on war profits, which includes income tax as well as excess-profits tax, hits the "ruthless" Indian industrialist, not the Indian people.

"Great Britain," the Nationalist asserts, "has forced loans upon us with guaranteed interest. Thus she milks us of our money. We are in perpetual pawn to British security holders."

No Indian loan has been floated in London for over thirty years. Those made before that were mainly for railroads and irrigation and at a low rate of interest. Seventy-five per cent of these securities, once held by British investors, had been taken over by Indians before the present war began. Since then India, from a debtor, has become a creditor country. It is quite independent of the London money market which ruled the world's finance before 1914. England's total investment in India today is less than her investment in the single item of Argentine railways. At the close of this war India will have enough sterling credits in England to carry out an enormous reconstruction program that will cover the demand for imported machinery, re-equip railways, and develop schemes for irrigation and electrification.

"Well," says the Nationalist, "there is the army! The Indian people are compelled to pay for the transportation and upkeep of a huge army, useful only to furnish an ever growing number

of British officers and troops with high pay and lush pensions, and to keep the people enslaved."

But one must ask himself how, without the discipline of an army, peace could have been maintained in a land of so many millions of estranging castes and hostile religions, with India's history of internal disorder and frontier difficulties. Considering its area and population, the expenditure complained of so bitterly is nothing to what any first-class power in Europe considers a peacetime necessity. It has kept the peace and freed the country from fear of foreign invasion. A hundred times what India has paid for it would seem to the casual observer a small price to pay for this security. For a century and a half the British Navy guarded India's shores from invasion for only a token payment, which ceased in 1938.

Since 1918 the army has been increasingly officered by Indians. Queen Victoria instituted the Indian Order of Merit, corresponding to the Victoria Cross, over a hundred years ago. Since World War I, Indians have been eligible for King's Commissions and for the Victoria Cross. A military academy for Indian officers has been in existence for a decade. The latest free gift of the British Government to India was twenty-five and a half million pounds to modernize the army for its defense. British troops are in India to defend it from invasion, but the cost of their training and equipment, guns, tanks and planes, is borne by Great Britain. And as soon as an Indian soldier crosses the Burma border, or ships for Iran or Egypt, he becomes a charge on the British, and not on the Indian Government.

"All the higher officers in the civil service," declares the Nationalist, "are British. Indians are given only the lowest and poorest places. Thousands of retired British officials live in luxury in England, drawing millions of pounds in annual pensions paid by the Indians."

However true this may have been in the ante-Congress days, since that time the service's extension to Indians has been wide and rapid. Of its nearly one million eight hundred thousand government officials of its civil administration, less than three

thousand are now British, less than one to every hundred thousand of a population more than twice as large as that of the United States. For every one in the general administrative services there are eight Indians. In the highest administrative posts there are more Indians than British. In the engineering departments there are fourteen to one, and in the medical departments thirty to one. Of every eleven judges in India ten are Indians. Civil service pay from the Indian standard is 'absurdly high, for salaries are based on those paid to the British, and the Indians' salaries cannot be less. Of two hundred and thirty thousand police less than a thousand are British, and of these only four hundred are officers. Pensions for age retirement and length of service in the Indian civil service are greater than those paid to career officers in the American foreign service.

All these charges were at the time distinctly good propaganda material, with enough truth in them to make a sweet American press, which, as the era of the foreign correspondent had not yet set in, was to remain, up to the outbreak of World War I, the Indian agitators' best asset for world opinion. They made noticeable dents in the smooth façade of the government program in London and gave the irrepressibles of the Commons a chance to heckle to some purpose. Meanwhile in India the Congress sessions were punctuated with increasing demands for "reforms," and Government House in Calcutta began to look at it askance.

The governmental scheme, devised when Great Britain took over, had included a central and provincial Legislatures, with executive and legislative councils, bills relating to foreign affairs, military and naval matters and revenue requiring the sanction of the viceroy. As early as 1861 the principle of representation had been introduced, but thirty years went by before the elective principle was added. And in spite of continuous agitation the new century was a decade old before the Indian Government bestirred itself and a series of real reforms began in the enlarging of the Legislatures and the widening of their functions.

India's chief reforms of the last quarter of the nineteenth century had been along social lines and due to the agitations of the patriot Kalinath Roy and his successor in the popular eye, Keshub Chundra Sen, much talked of in the foreign missionary societies of his day for his labors toward the sanction of widow-marriage and the penalization of polygamy. But the twentieth century reforms the Congress demanded were political ones. Some of these were reasonable, if premature, a few advisable from any angle, many impractical and even silly.

Wise heads in the Indian Government, it may be, might have sifted grain from chaff, but neither the Indian Government nor the India Office had yet learned the hard lessons of tolerance and patience time was to teach them. The civil service continued its development toward the ideal of half British and half Indian. Its hundred arms, railway, telegraph, posts, police, judiciary, reached further into every province. Each province had its similar machine, wheel within wheel, on a smaller scale. The provincial governments touched every city and town of any size.

But the Indian Government ignored the Congress. Lord Curzon, at Government House, dipped his patrician pen in viceregal gall to write in his best governing-class style, "The Congress is tottering to its fall, and one of my ambitions . . . is to assist it to a peaceful demise."

Curzon was a bad guesser. Before his term was out the Congress had become something to reckon with. It had the inestimable advantage of being, in the political sense, the only party there was. It was well organized, with committees in various provinces. It was noisy, met frequently, discussed all sorts of topics, race prejudices, creed disturbances, even national unity, and had its doings spread widely in the vernacular press. From the start it was overwhelmingly Hindu. The Moslem rank and file held distrustfully aloof, though the few who came in were valuable recruits, for they were the forward-minded ones who saw the Congress' non-communal possibilities.

Almost from the beginning the Congress had its distaff side,



though the women in politics had to come from a very small minority, for the census even of ten years ago showed only a million and a quarter adult women who could read and write in any language at all, and of these only one in eight was literate in English. But by the opening of the new century it had many centers in India. More and more women were rebelling at the *purdah* veil which had crept in with the Moslems and their notion that woman existed chiefly for man's sensual pleasure and for child-bearing, and the old admonition of the Law of Manu that "women, like oxen, are best tethered."

The Congress was a godsend to these. Women members were fewer at first in the potpourri, but they were pushing and made good press copy. Moreover they represented the more intelligent classes.

## *Chapter Seven*

### BANKED FIRES

UP to 1904 the Congress, as a body, held to the old principle of its founders: the British connection and a steady advance within it to greater participation in the government of India by purely constitutional methods. The Extremists were working in the dark. There was as yet no formal division into moderate center, conservative right and radical left. The Congress, one might say, was all center, though it had its leaders of right and left leanings. Its politics were crude and complicated. There were a dozen factions with overlapping policies, but the struggle, however many-sided, was at base one between the Extremist and Moderate followings and two men stood out from all the rest. They played significant roles in the tragedy which in this year of 1943 has reached its climax. These two men, both Brahmans, were Gopal Gokhale, the great Moderate and social reformer, and Bal Tilak, known as "Lakamaya" [Leader of the People], the agnostic firebrand.

They were as different as chalk from cheese. Gokhale was calm, logical, persuasive, with the even temperament of the thinker. Ten years before he had gathered a group of young men who called themselves practical idealists—a phrase that fitted Gokhale himself like a glove—and founded the Servants of India Society. He lived, brilliantly and selflessly, for the Indian people. So far as Great Britain was concerned, he was for the slow but sure way.

Tilak was a shaggy red-hot fanatic, the Billy Sunday of Indian independence. He had no patience with the Moderates' niggling. The sight of any Englishman made him see red, and hatred of Great Britain, like Sunday's hatred of sin and Satan, was a religion to him. Another good mutiny—better handled, of course—would have been to his taste. His text was the old Indian saying that has been immortalized by Professor R. H. Tawney: "You can eat a dead onion leaf by leaf, but you can't

skin a live tiger paw by paw. It will do the skinning and do it first."

Gokhale, who stood for all the sobriety Tilak had thrown overboard, in spite of his great gifts never reached the Indian youth, but Tilak pulled a tremendous oar with the students. His speeches were searing as lava and he wrote as he talked. The two newspapers he controlled were traitorous and laced with incitement. More than one assassin, on trial for the cowardly killing of a magistrate, laid the act to this inspiration.

It was Tilak who in 1904, a year when the Congress was presided over by an Englishman, the year Japan whipped Russia out of her boots, raised the first cry of *swaraj* [self-government]. It was the first time the word had been heard with a political connotation. The radicals echoed it. They abandoned the old badge of "Revolutionary" for the more respectable label "Nationalist" and made the word their shibboleth. From student patter it became common parlance.

This was enough to jolt the Moslems into action. They saw that in a self-ruled India, with the Hindu majority in the saddle, they would be helpless, and in 1906 they founded the Moslem League to protect themselves from being strangled by such a democracy, though their few leaders in the Congress for the time being sat tight there.

Their great leader and spokesman was the Aga Khan, a personage who was destined to play a significant part in the drama the curtain for whose second act was to rise with the coming war of 1914.

He is not a prince, though classed with the maharajas. Officially he is merely the Right Honorable Sultan Sir Mahomed Shah. India's Lord Lack-Land and Ruler without a Realm, he nevertheless to his humbler followers holds the keys of the Moslem heaven and hell. His family line goes back a thousand years. Tradition says he is descended from the legendary Old Man of Musse, master of the infamous sect of the Assassins (Maurice Hewlett told in *Richard Yea and Nay* how he sent his hashish-drugged satellite to kill Coeur de Lion) who in

turn descended from the son-in-law of the Prophet. As head, through this devious chain, of the great Ismailiyah sect, the Aga Khan receives offerings sent by the faithful from the uttermost parts of the earth. Wherever Islam has gone will be found contributors to his worldly wealth, to whom he is only a little short of divine. The Indian Government titles him Highness and gives him the salute of eleven guns.

He is the most streamlined of India's nobility. He headed its delegation to the League of Nations Assembly and represented it at the Geneva Disarmament Conference. He was chairman of the British India Delegation to the Round Table Conference in London. He was India's first representative at King George's coronation. His titular home is Bombay, but he is as well known in London, Paris and New York, a favorite alike in drawing rooms and racing paddocks. His horse Bahram won the Derby and St. Leger triple crown.

He founded the Moslem University at Aligarh and is the acknowledged leader of Moslem India. His political influence is incalculable.

And with the new League another leader who was to play a great part in the story came to the front. This was Mohammed Ali Jinnah, now known as "Quaid-im Azam" [Great Chief].

Jinnah is as Moslem as his name. Then he was under thirty, lean, shrewd-featured, poker-faced, a glass of fashion in a long-waisted frock coat and a trim Moslem fez. An English education with a degree in law and a colorful personality made him, while still a young man, one of Bombay's most successful barristers. In his youthful years he was private secretary to Dadabhai Naoroji, the Parsee Liberal, celebrated as the first Indian member of London's House of Commons. Naoroji no doubt infected him with the liking for politics. Today at sixty-seven, the League's president, Jinnah is one of the few Indian Moslems I know who seems to have no religious bigotry whatever. He married a Parsee, by the Church of England rite, in the cathedral at Bombay, and married his daughter to one.

He has never wasted time talking of Hindu-Moslem "Unity."

Indeed, he wastes little time talking about anything, for he is by nature a buttoned-up personality. From the Assembly gallery I have watched him sit for a long hour bolt upright, silent and motionless, his face a somber classicism, his mouth a thin, pale-lipped slash of sarcasm, listening to the speech of a fire-eating Nationalist whose theories he despised. It is only when he is sufficiently roused that you get a spurt of the real force coiled under that algid exterior. Then he is agile-minded, satiric and didactic by turns, with a leaning toward dramatic gesticulation barbed with caustic repartee.

If he ever had any illusions as to democratic "procedures" for India he has them no longer. He infuriates the modern Nationalists nowadays by admitting bluntly that it is not a nation at all in the Western sense, but only a "conglomeration of communities" for which Western democracy is quite unsuited. He left Congress, shaking off the dust of his feet against it, twenty years ago. That, however, does not make him a friend of England. He hates her like poison, but he hates the Congress like hell-fire.

It was to be a long tug of war between Gokhale and Tilak. Friendship ceased. Finally Tilak's followers tried to take the Congress by force. The police had to be called in and the meeting broke up in wild confusion. But Gokhale's Moderates were too powerful and the rebels were driven into the wilderness, to remain outside the Congress circle for nine years. Conservatism still held the fort: self-government within the empire on dominion lines, to be attained by strictly constitutional means; membership in the Congress to be held only by subscribing to its creed.

But the radicals, under their new name of Nationalists, went on with their grim work outside, intent on the ultimate capture of the Congress machine.

The Indian Government serenely played into their hands. Before his retirement as viceroy, Curzon, whose god was efficiency, had decreed the partition of the great eastern province of Bengal. With him convenience in administration had overshadowed its people's sentiment of unity. To themselves they

were not Indians of Bengal: they were Bengali and (at least the Hindus) were proud of the distinction. The plan was announced and partition became a fact. It was somewhat as if Theodore Roosevelt, reaching for his Big Stick, had remarked to Loeb one day, "Maryland is a little difficult to manage. I'll just cut it in two and make the Eastern Shore a separate state." One can imagine the rage of the good citizens of Baltimore.

The only ones who regarded the major operation with equanimity were the Moslems, who were in the large majority in the eastern portion of the province and counted it a recognition of their importance. The fury of the Hindus rose like an angry tide. Their outraged leaders lifted their hands to heaven and called on the people to remember Kali, their Great Mother (she is the dreadful goddess of Calcutta, the Lover of Blood), and to strike in her name. "Mother Kali," foamed one vernacular newspaper in Calcutta, "thirsts. . . . Only human blood will sate her. O Sons of Kali, offer her this in worship, even giving your lives to gain it. On the day when every village thus worships the Mother, her divine spirit will fall on the people of India and their hands will seize on freedom." They dug up an old song, "*Bande Mataram*" [Hail, O Mother!] and made a Hindu "Marseillaise" of it.

Tilak hurried to Bombay, leaving a spitting trail of fire behind him, and organized students and small boys to preach a boycott of British goods—the first time this weapon had been tried. Wide disorder followed, with arson and assassination. One youth was sent to Paris to learn the technique of bomb-making and came back with it.

But the Indian Government, at the very center of the maelstrom, took no heed. It lumbered on its predetermined way, like a surly bison disdainful of irritating gadflies, while a hundred maggot-headed students were haranguing throughout British India. They made a hero of the young terrorist Vinayak Savarkar, coworker with the reds in European capitals. Arrested in London and deported under guard to India, he had dived overboard in Marseilles harbor and swum ashore. He was sent

to the Andaman Islands under life sentence only after a prolonged controversy as to his custody between the British and French Foreign Offices, which in the end had been referred to The Hague. Only after five long years of shilly-shallying was the unwise partition canceled. But by that time the mischief had been done. The long-festering popular anger had left no mood for gratitude.

The Moslems, meanwhile, as was inevitable, had resented the Hindu agitation. What were known as the Morley-Minto Reforms, which established the new legislative councils, were then under discussion and the Moslem chiefs saw their opportunity. They concentrated on Lord Minto, the Viceroy, demanding a greater representation for Moslems in the councils than was called for by their ratio to the population. In all but two provinces they were in a helpless minority, yet they owned the larger part of India's landed property and their troops were in the vast majority in its army. It was the principle by which Arizona has as many senators at Washington as New York State.

Lord Minto fell for the proposal. The Hindus fought hard, but the Indian Government in Calcutta and the British Government in London gave the Moslems the decision. It was the first introduction of the principle of "communal representation," which was to drive a new and powerful wedge between Hindu and Moslem and add another element of disunion to the problem. Many of the Moslem leaders saw its danger. Even Jinnah threw his weight against it.

To the Hindus it was one more proof of Great Britain's perfidy, one more convolution of the plot to fan the flame of Hindu-Moslem antagonism, play off the Moslems against the Congress (which was overwhelmingly Hindu) and continue to rule by division.

All the British insistence that this policy was necessary to prevent the Hindu majority from strangling the Moslem minority in the *thuggee* manner with its own girdle, will not kill for the Hindu the damnable odor of suspicion. There is

too much in the record. Such, for instance, as the 1850 memorandum of Lord Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay, "*Divide et impera* was the old Roman motto, and it should be ours." And the much-quoted counsel of Colonel John Coke, Commandant at Moradabad, offered to the British Crown when the taking over from the East India Company was being argued: "Our endeavors should be to hold in full force the (for us fortunate) separation which exists between the different religions and races, not to endeavor to amalgamate them. *Divide et impera* should be the principle of the Indian Government." Feckless Sir John Strachey gives suspicion his pinch of potential fertilizer by implication in his "The truth plainly is that the existence side by side of these hostile creeds is one of the strong points in our political position in India."

One knows, to be sure, that today much more than a sense of discretion and the presence of the reporters in the gallery would make this sentiment unthinkable to a British statesman, but they are precious memories for the Indian Nationalist to summon, with his unhappy troop of Things-Better-Left-Unsaid, pale Banquo ghosts for John Bull's feasts!

The Congress, as was to be expected, protested against Minto's separate electorates on a religious basis as "a humiliating distinction between Moslem and non-Moslem subjects," but the fiat had gone forth.

Before and after the discussion of the Reforms disorder was rampant. In 1908 a bomb thrown by mistake into the wrong carriage killed two English ladies, and a few months later an Indian police inspector was killed on the Calcutta street. Subversive societies with centers in London, Paris and New York were uncovered in various Indian cities. In 1909 a public prosecutor was assassinated outside a police court, and General Sir William Wyllie, political aide-de-camp to the Secretary of State for India, was murdered in the Imperial Institute in London by an Indian student of the Tilak group. In 1910 an Indian officer of police was shot dead in the Calcutta High Court.

At the Royal Durbar in 1911 George V, the King-Emperor,



in proclamation announced the building on the Jumna plain, at Delhi, ancient capital of the Mogul Empire and the site of six more ancient Delhis, of a new capital, on a scale commensurate with India's future greatness; one that should be a pattern for the whole Oriental world, architecturally and artistically a combination, like India, of East and West, the enduring monument of British rule.

The announcement was greeted with a sulphurous storm of protest and the projected expenditure was made the text of a thousand diatribes. During the next year terrorist outrages continued, and at its close the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, riding in processional down Delhi's Chandni Chowk elephant-back, to the palace in the Red Fort where the ceremonial handing over of the city to the Government of India was to take place, was severely wounded by a bomb thrown from a balcony.

By 1913 the Moslems, having gained what they wanted by the separate electorates, had begun to smile again at the Congress, which, though with a bad grace, made the best of Minto's communal electorates. The League formally adopted the Congress' ideal of self-government within the empire and lined up with the Moderates.

The next year Mrs. Annie Besant, that vivacious and sharp-tongued study in sepias, made a flying leap from theosophy to politics and burst upon the Congress like the sun on a dismal day. She was then in the prime of her splendid powers and set herself to the incredible task of mixing the Moderate oil and the Nationalist water into a Home Rule League.

This, in a nutshell, was the situation that faced the Indian Government in the summer of 1914.

In late July, with the whirlwind of World War I just below the horizon, a ship was in the North Atlantic, making for the English Channel, carrying a spectacled, middle-aged Indian, a small active man with unruly hair and draggled mustache streaked with gray. His name was Mohandas Karamachand Gandhi.

## Chapter Eight

### SOUNDINGS

I CAME on the printed name of Gandhi first in 1913, in London, when I picked up an Indian paper at the St. James's Club—the *Madras Mail*, I think it was—and read an account of the All-India National Congress at Karachi. It had passed a resolution of "admiration for the heroic endeavors of Mr. Gandhi and his followers and their unparalleled sacrifice in their struggle for the maintenance of the self-respect of India and the redress of Indian grievances in South Africa."

I had the familiar sensation of the ringing of the little bell, so I must have heard the name before but could not recollect where. That afternoon I dropped in to see a friend in the famous department whose business it is to know everything worth knowing that may have a bearing on empire affairs. All he had to do was to pull out a file and there it was, an astonishing dossier, as far as bulk went, that I thought would have made the Archbishop of Canterbury's look like a package of cigarette papers. Evidently the man was a somebody. "Help yourself," he said, and I settled down to read.

Having had to do with government reports myself, I knew they were considered "able" only if they were dry, but this account contrived also to be interesting. An Indian who has been a London barrister, who has won medals for heroism, been confined in solitary as a "dangerous prisoner," and whose name is tagged with the dubious "Career to be closely followed" has his points.

Here was a public character who had spent twenty years in South Africa, in the political limelight most of the time. In that period he had toured India, speaking in many of its greater cities. He had published several books. He had founded a periodical that had preached his social and political doctrines in its every issue for a decade. And I knew less of him than I knew of the Dalai Lama!

In the years since then a dozen biographies of Gandhi have appeared. Romain Rolland led the procession. One account, virtually an autobiography though set down by other pens, errs even less on the side of reticence than Rousseau's *Confessions*, Marie Bashkertseff's *Journal* or our own Butte's *Story of Mary Maclean*. Probably few men living have had more written about them. He has been an aggravating puzzle for students of human nature and of politics and no two biographers have derived the same formula.

But in 1913, outside of India and the particular circle in London who interested themselves in Indian affairs, he had attracted comparatively little attention.

The dossier I read was a curt résumé, but it hit the high places and furnished a framework for the running picture that in time I was to build upon it for myself.

#### MOHANDAS KARAMACHAND GANDHI

Born 2 Oct, 1869, of Jain stock, at Porbandar, Kathiawar, India. Early education at Rajkot, Bhavnagar.

The Gandhi line ran to prime ministers. For the rulers of Porbandar, which is a tuppenny-hapenny Native State to the north of Bombay, one of the congeries of tiny entities of the peninsular Kathiawar country, had learned to take on brainy commoners to handle the stodgy details of management, anticipating the professional city-manager idea in the United States. His grandfather, his father and his uncle had served several of its States in this capacity, and his father, retired, had the dignity of a decent pension.

Family well-to-do, noted for intense religious belief. Mother known for public spirit and benevolence. Against some family opposition went to London where he took Barrister's Degree at the Middle Temple.

Gandhi's autobiography shows a shy boy, afraid of the dark, no mixer at school and a sluggish scholar who hated mathe-

matics and despised sports. His father and mother were pillars of the family temple. A bit of his boyhood doggerel was

The Englishman is mighty.  
He is six measures tall.  
He rules because he eats much meat  
And the Hindu none at all.

He concluded that if the Indians took to meat "the English might be overcome." This and "England I could never bear" are indication enough that at that early age he had no love for the British, though he liked one of his teachers, who made him read the Sermon on the Mount which was to influence his thinking profoundly. He did not take to the missionaries, who stood on the street corner "pouring abuse on Hindus and their gods," and had a dislike for Christianity.

His character seemed curiously to swing pendulum-like from one extreme to the other. In the one phase he smoked cigarettes on the sly, ate meat and stole coppers from a house servant; in the other, the thought of a blemish on his conduct was unbearable, he loved truth so much that he never told a lie, and made the returning of good for evil his guiding principle. He was married at thirteen to a girl wife of twelve—when he was still afraid to sleep without a light.

Gandhi was a mahatma before I saw Porbandar for myself. The little state is a backwash off the beaten track which few foreigners have ever heard of, let alone visited, and from the tourist standpoint quite without interest. Just one of a thousand bits of the Indian kaleidoscope, a blend of filth and color. A sunny, drowsy town winking whitely at a drowsier harbor, a palm-treed place of strolling gray cows and shrieking children, bright-eyed as birds. Of women patting fuel cakes of cow-dung on the walls like Chinese swallows' nests, of lousy beggars and rosaried ochre-robed holy men, of sedate schools and glittering shops and the spacious gardens of the well-to-do. In the center the "palace," whose musty Victorian drawing rooms saw the daylight only on the rare occasions when the British Political

Officer visited it, to make official salaam to the ruler and drop a few admonitory hints to the Prime Minister.

The first policeman I met pointed out to me the old Gandhi mansion, a huge rambling structure whose stone walls, like weathered white marble, with wide windows and upper verandas, lifted its four stories between two smaller temples to the demigods Krishna and Rama. In the distance was a glimpse of the rippling sea with what looked like a disused shipyard, and one caught a whiff of the salt water.

The policeman seemed proud to show it. Clearly he felt it reflected luster on the town. He had been in it many times. One upper room at the side was a chapel, with an altar for worship that was always covered with flowers and had an ever-burning light. No, he had never seen Mr. Gandhi of Wardha—he had been in the place only a year. But it was known that he had been married from that house. Many people came to see it, sometimes from as far as Calcutta.

I had better luck at an ancient shrine near the river that smelled of dead marigolds, cocoanut oil and *ghi* [clarified butter] and by grace of a modest offering made the acquaintance of its caretaker, a patriarchal old party with a disarming smile. Had he known Gandhi, when he was a boy? Had he not! Why, they had been born in the same week. They used to play on the beach together, and feed grain to the gulls.

“Does the *Huzoor* ask if the little Mohandas had a temper? Indeed he was no brother of a sheep! But not quarrelsome, no. He would not fight back, but when he was eaten by rage he would go and do something strange and dreadful. He used to say that was the hate which he would not turn against one who had hurt him, but which had to come out of his soul.”

“What sort of things would he do?”

“Well, once a boy threw a stone at him that cut his head and made it bleed. He did nothing to the stone thrower, but he went off and touched one of the Untouchable boys. Actually put his bare hands on him—and took no bath afterward! If his father had known of it he would have been beaten with bamboo rods!

He was flogged once at the school by the master, who had been imported from Bombay. What did he do? A thing most foul and horrible. He went off with his brother and another boy and in a secret place they ate some goat's flesh!"

Yes, that was in the books. It made him sick, and that night he dreamed a goat was bleating inside his ribs.

"One thing I pray the *Huzoor* to hold in memory. Since Mohandas has become a mahatma and a holy man, who they say can lead the viceroy around by the nose (pardon if my words offend the ear, when offense is not intended!) it has been alleged by an ill-wisher, whose evil the gods will requite in their good time, that I myself was that other boy who ate the goat's flesh with him. That is a lie most damnable, O Noble Lion of America, whispered to blacken my face before my neighbors. When he asked me to procure him for six *annas* a slab of fresh goat's flesh, could I have known he intended to eat it? Yet the falsehood will no doubt cling to my dishonored beard till I die."

When the family adviser said, "Mohandas should follow the family bent and become a prime minister. He will need legal training for that. Why not send him to London to study?" his mother was horrified. It was almost like saying, "Let him go out and rob a Brahman holy man, and for good measure kill a cow." To cross the sea was anathema. And England was a godless country. She had heard of young Indians who had gone there to study and had fallen into evil ways. What would the Caste Council say?

But the boy was stubborn and the idea drew him. He spoke English. He had even read some English books. And he was not a child now. Perhaps Porbandar was growing too small for him. Perhaps he was feeling the first touch of the spur, the flick of love of power, heritage from his ancestors, who had held the reins and liked it. At long last his mother yielded. She made him swear an oath to keep the three abstinences, wine, liquor and women, and he borrowed money from a family friend to outfit himself.

At Bombay a general meeting of the Caste fiercely disap-

proved. They warned him that he would be "out-casted." But he went.

At the end of his third year in London he passed his law examinations and took the first ship for home.

After a short practice at law in Bombay and Rajkot, he went on legal business to South Africa.

There had been no blithe news for him when he landed. His mother was dead. It was all up, too, with his prime minister-ship. The Indian Government had moved in on innocent little Porbandar and taken it under its Bombayan wing. No more pickings for outside talent. A British political agent was henceforth to be all-in-all for Kathiawar.

The Caste Council had him on its black list. He had to travel to Nasik, in the tiger and leopard country, the filthiest and the most holy city next to Benares in the Ganges Valley, to purify himself.

His brother staked him for a try at Bombay, but it was not a success. He came back and hung out his shingle in Rajkot, Kathiawar's chief town. But drafting was all he could find to do, a beggarly handful of rupees a month. At this time he had "a shock which changed the whole course of my life!" The incident was a quarrel with the British political agent, whose aid he solicited in his brother's interest and who, after a wordy altercation, had a servant somewhat hasten the order of his caller's departure. It convinced Gandhi that "conspiracies of officers for power were the order of the day" and that "such an atmosphere was poisonous."

An Indian firm with connections in South Africa was bringing a suit in Durban for forty thousand pounds. It offered him a return ticket and a hundred and five pounds for a year's work there as legal aid. It was better than nothing, and he bade his family farewell and sailed for Natal.

During his practice in South Africa he took up the cause of the Indian settlers, and under the Crown Colony was instru-

mental in having the so-called "Black Act" modified in favor of the Indian laborers.

In his early twenties there Gandhi was a quaint study in opposites. He showed the same vibration between altruism and egoism that had marked his childhood. Today's hatred of injustice and tyranny would tomorrow become an instinct to be overbearing and domineering. Selfishness and other-worldliness would merge into a naïve vanity that showed itself in a demand for public notice and a passion for publicity.

On his first visit to the Durban Court he entered the chamber wearing a frock coat and a turban, which latter was permitted only to Moslems. He had chosen the costume because it "marked him out from other Indians." Though the turban is not, like the broad-brim of the old-fashioned Quaker, a *sine qua non* to the Hindu, as it is to the Moslem, he left the court rather than take it off. He did not neglect to write the press about it. "The question was much discussed in the papers," he records. "Thus it gave me an unexpected advertisement in South Africa within a few days of my arrival."

This incident is characteristic of the method Gandhi later developed. The skill with which he uses an everyday happening to advantage is enough to turn the ordinary plodding press agent green with envy.

The Indian was the underdog in South Africa. When he made application to practice in Natal's Supreme Court, the Law Society at first objected on the ground that "the law did not contemplate that a colored person should be admitted to practice." Railway regulations forbade "colored persons" to ride first or second class, and on the train to Pretoria he was ordered to take a place in the baggage car. Protesting, he was put off at a way station and his bundles pitched out after him. He had to sit shivering in the station all night.

When he boarded the coach next day a Dutchman struck him in the face and the conductor made him sit outside. There an attempt was made to throw him off and he was so brutally



treated that the white passengers protested. At the night stop the town's best hotel would not take him in. He had to sleep in an Indian shop. At the Pretoria Hotel he had to have the other guests' permission before he could eat in the dining room.

At the hotel in Johannesburg, in the Transvaal, there was "no room" for him. He could not even enter it at the invitation of a guest, as Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt found when, during a visit in the city, she wrote him asking him to call. He sent his white secretary, a young lady, to explain. Mrs. Catt borrowed the office of an acquaintance and asked him there. Again the secretary came to tell her regretfully that the doorman would not bring him up in the elevator. On the trams Indians could ride only on top, in the three rear seats. They could not enter the public libraries or theaters.

Their leaders had appealed to President Kruger for their rights as citizens: the grim old Boer had made them stand bareheaded in his courtyard. "Ye are children of Ishmael, and bound to slavery!" he shouted at them, and went back to his Old Testament and the polishing of his long Dutch rifle. When Gandhi passed along the footpath in front of Oom Paul's house the sentry kicked him into the street.

He buckled down to the grinding work on his law case. He managed to cut his own hair rather than go to "coolie shops." When he protested against the treatment of the Indians in letters to the newspapers, he was denounced as "an unwelcome visitor."

He began to explore the possibilities of lifting the unjust restrictions put upon the Indians in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. First the refusal to allow them to travel first and second class on the railways. He won a partial victory on that. Their living conditions took his attention next. The "locations" assigned them were unhealthy, but their filth and its diseases were their own fault. He had learned sanitation in London, and he shamed them into improvement.

He found lodging in a Christian home that was a nucleus of "resisters." They were a motley crew, a clutter of odd reli-

gious sects, including one Plymouth Brother who, like Rasputin, believed in occasional sinning so that he might enjoy the ecstasy of being "saved."

A "colored man" was not allowed to sit in a Church of England congregation, but this coterie was not so finicky. To please them he nodded through the service in the Wesleyan Chapel, varying his reading of Tolstoy and Thoreau, and his study of the Koran, the Zend-Avesta and the Hindu writings, with arguments as to Christian tenets.

Incidentally, his forty-thousand-pound law case was won. But the wrongs of his people had got into his blood. He was well into his third year in Natal before he was ready to go back to India.

Not all the Indians in South Africa were hand-to-mouth laborers. Many had worked out their indentures and were "free." Some had gone into trade and were well-to-do. A few were wealthy. His fight for the poorer ones had endeared him to all, and a farewell banquet was given in his honor. With the coffee came the news that the government was to introduce a bill taking the franchise from all Indians, a virtual Exclusion Act.

Then and there he called for pen and paper and drew up a petition to the government and a manifesto to be signed by all Indians. He gave up his steamer tickets: it was no time to go back to India.

The committee called many meetings, at which he was the chief speaker. He had no flair for oratory and no appealing presence. None of the tricks of the political spell binder. But what he said was full of confidence. The petition achieved ten thousand signatures within a month.

The Legislature passed the bill, but it went, with the manifesto, to the Colonial Office in London, and the Secretary of State for India disallowed it. It was the "coolie barrister's" first substantial victory.

He was sent by the Indian Community in Natal and the Transvaal to India to publicize their continued illegal treat-

ment, where he made speeches in various cities. Two visits to London in the interest of relief legislation. Served (stretcher-bearer and Ambulance Corps) in Boer War and Zulu Rebellion. Two medals. Launched the publication *Indian Opinion*.

In India Gandhi printed and distributed pamphlets. He made speeches in Bombay, Poona, Madras. He wrote open letters to the *Allahabad Pioneer*—Kipling's paper. He rattled the dry bones of the government sepulchre.

Reuters cabled to South Africa summaries of his speeches and there were demonstrations against the Indians. Its leaders sent him a hurry call. When his ship reached Natal he was attacked by a mob of hooligans. He had to escape in disguise from the house where he had taken refuge. After that he hired an ex-bruiser to go about with him for protection. When the Secretary of State for the Colonies cabled the Natal government to prosecute his assailants, he refused to help the prosecution.

At the outbreak of the Boer War he organized a volunteer stretcher-bearer corps. Eleven hundred Indians went to the front. He was often in the firing line. General Buller mentioned him in dispatches. The war over and the Boer power broken, he went back to Bombay, where in a twelvemonth he had a law practice of five thousand pounds a year.

But South African intolerance had begun to seethe again. Under the new Union of South Africa the Transvaal government had an Asiatic Department that separated the British sheep from the Indian goats in the same old style. Now there was to be registration of all Indians, with the humiliating thumbprints. Rich and poor, men and women, each had to carry a ticket and report from time to time to the police, like England's ticket-of-leave men.

The "coolie barrister" closed his Bombay office and sailed again to South Africa, this time with his wife and children. He reopened practice in Johannesburg, in the Transvaal. When the terrible pneumonic plague appeared in one of the mines he took charge of the victims and burned their infected quarter. In the

so-called Zulu Rebellion he formed another Indian ambulance corps.

Founded at his own expense two "retreats" [*ashrams*] for moral and religious training of children and youths.

In these *ashrams* the teachers took vows to tell no lie, to yield to no sensual desire, to live frugal lives, use nothing of foreign manufacture and own nothing they could do without. Manual training, spinning and farming were taught, and the daily menial tasks were shared by all alike. Support and tuition without cost for ten years, after which pupils became teachers, or went free under the single vow of *Ahimsa*, non-violence to all living creatures. In this work he did not lack volunteer associates, such for example as Henry Polak, the English sociologist and later privy council agent in London. He it was, he told me, who gave Gandhi Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, a book which he later has said revolutionized his whole life.

There his predilection for fasting began. If derelictions came to light in the staff he did not punish the offenders, he punished himself by a fast. When a young widow of one of his settlements seduced a good-looking boy he fasted seven days and took only one meal a day for four months.

This is in origin the "sitting *Dharma*" of the old Sanskritists, so called from the ancient devotee of the name who, legend says, sat so long in religious meditation that his legs dropped off. It exists in some form or other throughout the Orient. In China the wronged sits on the wronger's doorstep and starves till he gets justice. In Japan he does *hara-kiri* at the defaulter's gateway, to shame him in the eyes of his neighbors. Gandhi's fast at this time was a spiritual variant whose object was not the selfish gaining of redress but an unselfish desire to bring about, from the spectacle of his own suffering, the sinner's contrition.

In his professional work in the courts he was sound enough, but in these outside activities he showed the old characteristic duality. In the one aspect he was all gentleness and charity, of

infinite patience with sinners and fools. In the other he was full of vagaries and eccentricities. Many a last will and testament has been broken for far less.

He had an uncomfortable habit of enforcing his whimsies on other people. He objected to window curtains that shut out God's sunsets: the only material beauty to him was the beauty of Nature, man-made things possessed only utility, and the Taj Mahal was no more than a monument to the tyranny of forced labor and money waste. He insisted that the dog should be a vegetarian like the rest of them—a huge success till the neighbors traced a series of nightly thefts from their meat houses. He prohibited tea and coffee. He even experimented with a no-salt diet and could not understand his coworkers' lack of enthusiasm. He forbade sugar, jam and spices, which went famously till mysterious caches of sweets were discovered under the dormitory beds.

These arbitrary crotchets were harmless enough, though irritating. But with some others his colleagues found it hard to be patient. He published a *Confession of Faith* that inveighed against all modern ideas of medical healing. He preferred a slab of mud to a Red Cross dressing. When Mrs. Polak's baby was sick he swaddled it in wet mud till it went into convulsions. Luckily she tore off the plaster and applied first aid in time. Yet Mr. Polak has assured me that there were times when the mud worked like a charm.

Once, during his absence, Kasturbai, his wife, had an intestinal hemorrhage and it was necessary to perform an operation without chloroform. The surgeon called him up by long distance and asked permission to give her beef tea. He hotly refused. "If I am not left free to prescribe what diet I think best," said the doctor, "I will not hold myself responsible for her recovery."

Gandhi came by the next train to find the crisis safely past. The operation had been successfully performed. He was informed that the patient had had the beef tea. He called the surgeon a fraud. "As a matter of fact," said the doctor. "she

had already had it when I phoned you. We doctors count it a virtue to deceive when by doing so we can save a human life." In his autobiography Gandhi says he was "deeply pained" at the deception. Against the doctor's protest that she would be likely to die, he took Kasturbai away within the hour. Luckily, she lived through it.

Apostle of *Satyagraha*, a term taken to mean non-violent resistance to law, expressing itself in strikes, non-co-operative campaigns and the so-called "Civil Disobedience." Under this title he has instigated various subversive movements.

CRIMINAL RECORD: Transvaal, 1906, solitary confinement for three months as a "dangerous prisoner." 1907, imprisoned for two months and released on compromise.

It was when all else failed to kill the objectionable Registration Regulations that he gave the vocabulary of the Indian people this new word, literally "truth firmness." He defined it as the power of truth in the soul. To demonstrate this power he proposed at a public meeting that all take oath to refuse to register. When the law came into operation only four per cent of the Indians of the Transvaal complied with it.

Without registration certificates no Indian could legally remain in the country, and he and his followers dared arrest and deportation. Under his direction a group of wealthy and influential Indian merchants, arrested and forcibly put across the state line, re-entered and demanded imprisonment. One of them (a Cambridge graduate) in order to achieve arrest hawked vegetables in the street without a license. By these tactics Gandhi made the law a laughingstock.

He was summoned to court and ordered to leave the country. On his refusal to do so he was given a two months sentence with hard labor. In the jail he was stripped and given the filthy clothes of a Zulu prisoner, herded and fed with its degraded felons. With them he broke stone and mended the roads. He could not attend the chapel services—they were only for white prisoners. One night he was put in a loathsome ward crowded with vicious Zulu and Chinese criminals. He was denied table, pen and ink, and reading matter save a couple of religious

books sent him in pity by General Smuts. Later he was transferred to the old "Fort" prison at Johannesburg, guarded by its white-clad warders, stout knobkerries under their arms, and half-naked keepers swaggering with their ready *assegais*.

After his release the Union government was in an ugly mood and Smuts was lacking in vision. Perhaps he thought he could tire Gandhi out. One act of oppression followed another. The crowning outrage was a tax which in effect made slaves of the indentured Indian laborers, coupled with a law annulling their marriages and making their children illegitimate.

Gandhi called a strike and the miners laid down their tools. The company surrounded the mines with wire netting and drove them underground with whips. He called on the women to join the fight and they did. The company ousted them from their dwellings and threw their belongings into the streets. He gathered two thousand men and women into an army and led them in a march, on a handful of rice and an ounce of bread a day, across the forbidden border into the Transvaal.

The story, cabled to India, raised no end of a row. Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy, made a fiery speech in Madras, and the lethargic India Office in London was jolted into action. Smuts appointed a commission to reconsider the law, which meant it would be canceled. *Satyagraha* had won. Gandhi suspended the strike and sailed for England.

REMARKS: Deeply pious but unconventional religionist, of socialistic and ascetic tendency. Said to be celibate. Has undoubtedly increased the freedom and raised the living standard of Indians in South Africa. Believed to be strongly pro-British, though the peculiar doctrine he preaches, which he has put into practice with limited success on several occasions, and the great influence he has over Indians everywhere, make him one to be considered in connection with any popular agitation in India or change in its present situation.

Note: Career to be closely followed.

This was the man who in that hot and humid summer of 1914, while the news of the outbreak of war was storming across the front pages of the press of the world, was entering the English Channel, bound for London.

## *Chapter Nine*

### ARMS AND THE MAN

**T**O see a great nation suddenly leap from peace to war is to come into the field-of-force of a vast emotion. London in those August weeks of 1914 must have been a profound experience for Gandhi. His ship got the news while it was still two days out, and the slow nosing up the Channel, through the mine fields that were being frantically sown, was a feeble foretaste of what was waiting for him ashore.

It was waiting for me, too, when I arrived, with my wife, in flight from the hideous turmoil of the Continent. I had been transferred to the embassy at Tokyo, under orders to proceed via the Trans-Siberian Railway, and from Rome we had run full tilt through three mobilizations—the Italian, the Austrian and the German. We had had two days and three nights of being turned out of our train in the dark on rain-soaked sidings and thrust into lampless noisome cars that the day before had held horses and now were crammed with soldiers hurrying to join their colors.

At Munich I had discovered I was wearing a German lieutenant's overcoat and my wife had exchanged her rug and gotten badly stung in the bargain.

We had reached Berlin the night of the German declaration of war and had spent the dark hours, disreputable, unwashed fugitives, finding dreadful rooms in a jammed hotel. Next day Gerard, our ambassador, his desk flooded with frantic cables from Senator Ollie James, whose wife was traveling with us to Tokyo, after Herculean efforts, had managed to get us on the special train of the Russian Ambassador who had been given his passports, and we had been in the unhappy Russian crowd of diplomats and titled refugees who had run the famous gauntlet across the Unter den Linden from the door of the Russian Embassy to our cars, while the frothing ladies and gentle-



men of Berlin had lined up to spit upon us and beat us over the heads with walking sticks and umbrellas.

Our train had not gone to Moscow—fighting was already going on at Eydtkuhnen and the frontier was closed—but to Copenhagen, whence we had fled to Esbjerg, the little butter-and-eggs town on the Danish coast, where I had gathered a shipload of hysterical American women and rapturous children and convoyed them in two days and a night across the North Sea, through released surface mines so thick that I had stood up all night with the scratch crew fending the devilish horned things off with hop poles. So we had come to Hull and at last, praise the Lord, I had commandeered a train to London and turned my charges safely over to our American refugee committee at the Savoy.

I speak of all this because it embodies the confusion and excitement of those weeks into which the lean brown man from South Africa had been plunged without warning, like a cool ingot into a furnace. I remembered the part he had played in the Boer War and the Zulu Rebellion, and I had a curiosity to see how he would react to this larger stimulus.

Quite a few of my acquaintances seemed to be aware of the little Indian; Hardinge's speech at Madras, which that courageous viceroy had had the pluck to thrust down the Cabinet's throat, had made the South African situation familiar to London as well as to Calcutta.

His name was generally coupled with the second of the two stock questions that people were asking. The first was "Will America come in before she would see England beaten?" At luncheon, at Sir Harry and Lady Brittain's, Sir Edward Grey (later Viscount Grey of Fallodon) gave it to me straight from the shoulder. William T. Stead, who came in for coffee, shot it at me between a war bulletin and his latest ghost story. It was the first thing Philip Kerr, the future Lord Lothian and British Ambassador in Washington, said to me next day.

The question that ran a close second was "How much will the dominions and India help?" For the word "India" has al-

ways been a synonym no less for the stark poverty of its masses than for the lavish wealth of its few. That was apt to bring in the name of Gandhi. Nobody could have dreamed then of India's sumptuous free gift—a hundred million pounds—that was to be forthcoming; but the instinct was sound that England would need all the friends she had and all the money she could raise, and Gandhi's name should carry weight with the Indians.

He looked a most mild-mannered person, anything but the conventional fanatic out to spin the world down a new ringing groove. He was something under medium size, slender and reedy and lighter of skin than the average Indian. In spite of his forty-five years and the gray in his hair and drooping, rather unkempt mustache, he had somehow a boyish look. His lips were heavy and his eyes behind his silver-rimmed spectacles were large and bulging. Kerr, when he was just down from Oxford, had gone to South Africa as one of Lord Milner's "Kindergarten" to help in the formation of the Union and had known Gandhi there. He told me a number of stories of him that I wish I remembered. He said that in Johannesburg he used to skip rope for exercise, which I could very well believe from his quick and springy step.

I had an opportunity to see the proof sheets of an article about him which told of his law-student years in London in the eighties. The story was ludicrous and at the same time pathetic. It was all so terribly different from what he had expected.

Even coming on the ship. He traveled first class and there was no Indian among the passengers that he could talk to. The first day aboard he got rid of his *shikka*, the hair tuft by which at the moment of death the orthodox Hindu is lifted to heaven, and the sacred hempen triple cord looped over the left shoulder, mark of the three great upper castes. For those emblems, he counted, ought to be signs of an inner and spiritual grace, and the way his caste treated the Untouchables, he thought, proved he was not fit to wear them. But these were the least of his troubles. His foreign clothes that he had been so proud of were wrong. His necktie for instance—no one aboard had one remotely like it. His short jacket felt immodest. He was haunted

by the fear of being laughed at. When he landed at Southampton he wore an elegant white flannel suit he had bought at Bombay, but it was the only white suit in evidence and he felt humiliated.

His first purchase in London (the Army and Navy Stores) was a natty garment: a long frock coat of the sort that in America has long ago been relegated to the country pulpit, and in England is the hallmark of the department-store floorwalker and the undertaker. Known as the Prince Albert, it died its social death twenty years ago in the Royal Enclosure at Ascot. He had supplemented this with a top hat and a double gold watch chain. But the coat flopped against his legs and he could not, for the life of him, keep the hat on his coarse, unruly hair. He used to spend hours in his room, putting it on and taking it off, and practicing tying his tie.

He was ashamed to tell anyone that he was married at his age, and with a son. For a long time he had known scarcely anyone but the English family with whom he lived at first. An Indian to whom he had brought a letter had taken him there—to learn English ways.

The money he wasted in trying to be an English gentleman! He took lessons in elocution (Bell's *Standard Elocutionist*) and in French. He even took a course in dancing that cost him a pound a week. And to cap the climax he bought a cheap violin and began lessons on it, no doubt to the anguish of his neighbors. But the French pronunciation tangled his tongue. The thud of the tom-tom and the wailing harmonies of the *sitar* did not suggest the glide and shuffle of Western dancing, and the tricky rhythms puzzled him. He could not keep step. And his violin would only squeak.

At last, in a violent reaction, he sold the frock coat and silk hat, disposed of the violin, cut out the lessons in French, elocution and dancing, and became a student, which was what he had come to London for. He took a room in a lodging house, walked ten miles every day to save bus fares, and bought a gas ring to do his own cooking for a shilling and thruppence a day.

In the interims of study he read some solid books. Huxley,

Edwin Arnold and Tolstoy in translation, and Carlyle's *Life of Mohammed*. He learned, oddly enough, to know his own sacred Sanskrit scriptures through the English versions, and he made the acquaintance of the Bible. The Old Testament bored him and Malachi put him to sleep, but the New Testament delighted him. He spent much time trying to weld together *The Light of Asia* and the Sermon on the Mount.

A lot of water had gone under the bridges since then. Here he was in London again, not now the forlorn young student but a seasoned man who had accomplished things and who managed a silk hat with no trouble whatever. From what I knew of him by this time I judged him something rather good as a politician. At any rate he had caught Smuts out. Kerr had said he was the only man whom he could truthfully say was both a saint and a politician. He had put the saint first. And he had added, "He is pro-British, of course."

That was what the dossier I had read said. But I had been wondering. The Boer War, when Gandhi had swung the Indians of Natal to the British side, was a long time ago. His autobiography had not yet been written, but in the past year I had been reading his *Hind Swaraj*, published in India only a few years previously, which a friend had sent me from Calcutta. I happened to know he had written the book shortly after a visit to London, when Lloyd George was about to launch his ambitious land campaign and both Laborites and Liberals were painting lurid pictures of the horrors suffered by the English wage earner, and I hoped it had been only a literary indiscretion and had not been widely circulated. Kerr seemed not to have read it. "We shall hear plenty more of him," he said, and he was certainly right.

Gandhi had come to London to confer with Gokhale, the Indian leader, old-time President of the All-India National Congress, who was well and favorably known in London, and who had helped him in his pro-Indian struggle in South Africa. But the outbreak of the war had stranded Gokhale in Paris, and Gandhi was at a loose end.

I need not have speculated, however, on his patriotism, whatever he had written in *Hind Swaraj*. He was running true to form. He sent out a call to all Indian students in the United Kingdom and dined a hundred of them. England was in serious trouble, and India must stand by.

Being students, and in large part of Nationalistic tendency, his enthusiasm at first left them chilly. Indians were slaves of the British: were they to fight with and for their conscienceless masters? But said Gandhi, "I do not consider that we are quite reduced to slavery, or that England's needs should be turned into our opportunity. What we justly complain of is more the fault of individual British officials than of the system. We can convert them by love." Indians, he told them, must forget their own differences in the common cause. Had not Redmond, the old wheel-horse of the Parnellites, said that for purposes of defense the Catholics would join hands with the Protestant Ulstermen? India was part of the empire—could not Hindus and Moslems join likewise in its defense?

Yet the thing puzzled me. What if some ruffianly Missouri-minded youth of the company had demanded to be shown how this sudden enthusiasm for the British Empire could be squared with the *Hind Swaraj*? For in that Gandhi had written lines strangely like these: "The condition of England is pitiable. What you call the 'Mother of Parliaments' is like a sterile woman and a prostitute. Parliament has not yet of its own accord done a single good thing." This could not have been written by one with any sense of parliamentary rule or constitutional procedure. It was not merely dislike of Great Britain and her institutions: it was the hackneyed jargon of the modern hater of democratic government. Such a *volte-face* was a whirling-dervish sort of thing that made one wonder how to classify it.

But none of his listeners questioned. Perhaps they were awed in the presence of one so esteemed in their land. Without eloquence, which no one in South Africa had ever accused him of possessing, without tricks of dramatic gesture or emotional ap-

peal, by sheer simplicity and directness, Gandhi won them, and when he asked for volunteers for ambulance training, the response was a ready one. He wrote to the Secretary of State for India offering to organize an ambulance and stretcher service and Lord Crewe accepted with thanks.

This was after I had left England, via New York and San Francisco, for my post in Tokyo. Gandhi did not see his bud of loyalty come to flower. The winter drizzle proved too much for him, and an attack of pleurisy drove him to the warmer skies of India, to receive on the New Year the King-Emperor's gold Kaiser-i-Hind medal for his humanitarian work in South Africa.

On his arrival there, at the annual dinner of Madras' legal fraternity, he gave the toast to the British Empire. "I discovered," he told the assemblage, "that the British Empire had certain ideals with which I have fallen in love, and one of those ideals is that its every subject has the freest scope possible for his energies and honor and whatever he thinks is due to his conscience. I think that this is true of the British Empire as it is not true of any other government."

The honeyed speech drew only praise: the leaders of Indian thought at that time, most of them Brahman lawyers, merchants and doctors educated in England, were quite content to hand down India to their sons about as they had found it, believing sincerely that the most it needed was a proper spokesman before Parliament. Like John Bright, for instance. Even in the fifties and sixties he had kept a sharp eye on India. It was his indignant protest that had made the Imperial Treasury pay half the cost of the Abyssinian War. He had lashed the Commons unmercifully over debiting to India the cost of the Duke of Edinburgh's presents to the maharajas, and the expense—some thirty thousand pounds—of the Prince of Wales' visit.

Those with no sentimental attachment to Great Britain believed that progress would be speedier along the path of amity. As the Indian saying goes, "If one must live in a tank, let him make friends with the crocodile." As to Gandhi, the various forms of *Satyagraha* which he had made use of in South Africa they counted a local agitation which had nothing to do with

India. What he said was no doubt what they expected from a London barrister and one of their own ilk.

The Congress, however, would scarcely have cheered that toast, even from Gandhi, whose name stood for so much now in India. The Moderates still held nominal control, but beside Gokhale they had few leaders of position and authority. The strong men who had nursed the organization through its growing pains were not young any longer.

The Moderates' chief mainstay, Pandit Motilal Nehru, father of the present firebrand Jawaharlal the *beau sabreur* of the Nationalists today whose name has sent the shivers down the trepidant back of more than one viceroy, was fifty-five. The Nehrus are a Kashmiri family of wealth and prestige, and have been for two hundred years. Its head in the early eighteenth century was a Persian and Sanskrit scholar whose learning made the Mogul Emperor Farrukhsayyar his patron, and under the royal favor the family came to Delhi. When the empire fell to pieces the family fortune was lost and they fled to Agra, where, at the time Motilal was born, his grandfather was the old East India Company's first legal expert.

The elder Nehru in his youth had been something of a problem. At college he had the name of a dullard and a rowdy. He did not find himself till he came in contact with the law. Then the legal bent of the family came out strongly, and while he was still a young man he had made his mark in the profession at Allahabad. Broad-browed, hard-mouthed and tight-lipped, with a pugnacious chin under the drooping mustache, he was the High Court's most brilliant debater and a terrible Turk for temper. He attended the early sessions of the Congress but was not much impressed with it. He called it more of a talk-talk machine than anything else. He looked with disfavor on its Extremists, though personally he liked Tilak's vigor. As the years went by and the radicals put the conservatives more and more on the defensive, he was to take a more active part in the Congress' doings, and by the outbreak of World War I he had become the Moderates' chief card.

He was British to the core in those days and, while a Hindu,

cared very little about either Hinduism or its caste rules. When he returned from England, where he had taken his son Jawaharlal to deliver him over to the tender mercies of an English education, he dared the anger of his caste by refusing peremptorily to perform the irksome and expensive purification ceremony required of the sea-crosser—the first high-class Brahman to kick over the traces. There was a splendid row about it, but he stuck to his guns. Thanks more than anything else to his example, the law has in this generation become very largely a dead letter. All his life he left religion to the women, and the Nehru women were as independent as the men. Kashmir was never wedded to the Moslem *purdah*, which they took on in Delhi, and they were among the first to throw it away after the coming of the British.

His older daughter, Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, wife of an ardent Nationalist, has held the post of Minister of Public Health and Local Government in the United Provinces, the only woman ever to occupy such a position. Her first husband, I believe, was the brilliant Dr. Syud Hossain, lecturer in the history of civilization at the University of Southern California.

A Kashmir Brahman (which is *creme de la creme* in India), the Pandit had a brain that made him the country's most erudite Sanskrit scholar, conversant with the literatures of Europe and Persia, and an income at law that was unrivaled. He lived like an Englishman and dressed like one. In taste he was something of an exquisite. Legend says he used to send his dress shirts from Allahabad to Paris for laundering. He entertained like a prince.

There is a story of him—I hope it is apocryphal—which is said to have a direct bearing on his later Congress career. When, after his stay in England, he came back to India, he made overtures for admission to a well-known club. Friends who knew his country better than he did assured him that he would be blackballed, and he withdrew his application. The affront was a dagger in a heart that until then had held only respect and friendship for England and Englishmen. He would have for-



sworn all association with the British but for certain English friends who would not be given up.

Such things exact a price. If the tale is true, who can guess how great a price in lost esteem was paid? For a little black ball can roll around the world and back again. I count many Nationalists among my friends, and I know none intimately who does not harbor a bitter grudge born of social exclusion.

For the fabric of India's non-official Society (always spelled with a capital S in the East) is white. Not only in the clubs, where one finds a few notable exceptions, but everywhere else, from the swank white-silk-and-parasols garden party at the tennis club to the bridge tea of the wife of the jute-bag exporter, the color line is strictly drawn.

Only a comparatively few Anglo-Indians (the term has ousted the older "Eurasian," now fallen into disrepute), and those of the highly placed, are tangled in its fringe. There are somewhere between one and two hundred thousand Anglo-Indians in India, and they are between the millstones, for the Indian has the same prejudice as the Englishman.

As to pure-blooded Indians, only maharajas and their higher officers make the grade. The average Indian, Hindu or Moslem, is socially ostracized in his own country. And on ships shuttling between British and Indian ports, Englishmen habitually boycott traveling Indians better born than they. This is an ugly fact that may have more to do with the declining prestige of the white man in the East than some of us imagine.

To discuss this British order of the day in the East with an Englishman is of course to be told that we Americans need not throw stones—we have enough glass houses below our Mason and Dixon Line. Yet our problem has been different enough. The American negro has a past history of African barbarism, with no trace of an Asian culture. Men living today remember when he was bought and sold as a chattel. To the Southern generation who had done the buying and selling, could his social equality be anything but unthinkable? One can understand the invocation in Virginia, on one regrettable occasion, of the Jim

Crow law in the case of a prince of an Indian dynasty older and prouder than any American name, of incredible wealth and with a Cambridge degree.

The British, however, have had no alibi. The sad thing about it is that they have never considered that they needed any.

Parenthetically it may be said that the Englishman by and large treats the Indian socially no worse than the high-class Brahman treats the Sudra, and no Englishman in India ever treated an Indian of breeding with half the arrogance and contempt with which the Indian of every caste today treats the Untouchable, even one with a diploma from Oxford or Columbia.

Motilal Nehru had counted himself an Independent, though by 1915 the old catchwords needed some redefining. As in Rome, where there is no middle ground between Quirinal White and Vatican Black, the line was beginning to be drawn sharply between conservative and radical. The Pandit's son, Jawaharlal, was young and untried.

Another of the old school, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, like the elder Nehru a noted Sanskrit scholar, was about the same age. Small and spare, a bit bowed now in 1943 with his eighty-two years, this great Brahman marshal of ultraorthodox Hinduism more than any other living man deserves the title of India's Grand Old Man.

In 1915 he was the Moderates' most sparkling and persuasive speaker. He had made his maiden Congress speech in its second year and has been the most conspicuous of its conservative members ever since.

He is famous as the planner and founder of the great Hindu University at Benares. He raised huge sums for its foundation and gave it its superb organization, the most astonishing native achievement I have seen in all Asia. (Gandhi has called him "India's number one beggar.") He too counted as an Independent, so far as the Congress Extremists were concerned.

He is the father of the *Mahasabha* [Great Society], the militant Hindu organization, which he founded in 1918 in the conviction that the political class he represented was a vanishing one. His pious frenzy is to leapfrog back to the Vedas and revive old-time India in which the Brahman was supreme. To him India is Hindu, and Moslemism is a parasite. There must be no compromise. This would mean *Shuddhi*, the conversion of the Moslems (not to mention the Christians and fifty other smaller sects) to Hinduism, the very thought of which makes a Moslem froth at the mouth. The avowed aims of the *Mahasabha* have not noticeably tended to heal the great communal breach.

The last time I saw Malaviya, in 1940 at his home in Allahabad, he had recently taken the *Kayakalp* treatment, administered by the famous Yogi, Bishandas Udasi. This is a method of rejuvenation which is said to be known only to a few adepts. The patient is immured for forty days in a windowless stone chamber typifying the womb. His only food is cow's milk and the juice of a certain fruit ceremonially prepared. He told me the fruit used was the *amla*. This, which the wild elephant loves as children love candy, is a species of myrobalan, ferociously tart, which I have seen only in India. A green crab apple is nothing to it. The Pandit sent a servant to a neighboring garden to pull one for me. His doctor, who happened to call while I was there, was disposed to pooh-pooh the whole business, myrobalan, womb chamber, Yogi and all. But the Pandit reminded him that his hair which had been white was turning black again and he could read once more without glasses, while he (the doctor) was unable even to cure his lumbago. It is certainly a fact that the Pandit's hair was darkening.

Later I visited Udasi's retreat near Muttra. He has taken the *Kayakalp* himself four times, the last time some twenty years ago, when he was a hundred and twelve. He has no hair—the last treatment apparently did not give perfect results—but he is chubby and his face is as unlined as a petunia. Seated, he looks like Hotei, the Japanese God of Generosity. There was

a Christian mission in the next village; when I asked the good ladies about him they shook their heads and looked skeptical. Only one of them remarked that there were "some strange things in India." I gathered they regarded unnatural prolongation of life, if not unchristian, as of very doubtful morality.

The Pandit told me he had taken the treatment in an effort to persuade Gandhi to do so, but that he feared the little man would not consent, on account of his oath against cow's milk.

Except for Malaviya and the elder Nehru, the Congress' Old Guard who were more or less Gandhi's age—Rajagopalachari, the Brahman southern leader, whose daughter, against caste rule, married Gandhi's son; Srinivasa Sastri the schoolmaster, also a Madras Brahman, who had succeeded Gokhale as head of the Servants of India Society and was to be a member of the Peace Conference of 1921, a delegate to the League of Nations and High Commissioner to South Africa; Sir Tej Saprú, the Liberal, Motilal's cousin, who in the coming years was to fight a losing battle with Jawaharlal Nehru for the sway of Gandhi's choice between left and right; and a few others—played then no significant roles. Aney, now in 1943 a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, was thirty-five. He was to become the Moderates' old stand-by, swinging like a pendulum between the Congress and Malaviya's *Mahasabha*. He likes Americans: I could always depend on him to see that I got a good seat at an interesting session of the Assembly.

Of the younger leaders who promised to emerge into prominence the chief was Patel, with whom the British have still to reckon. Today he is approaching seventy; then he was on the soft side of forty. A farmer by birth and instinct but by profession a lawyer with a degree of barrister of the Middle Temple in London and a prolific Indian practice, thickset, bull-necked (he must weigh two hundred pounds) and as obstinate as they make them, he is as sharp and shrewd as a Kentucky horse trader. He has one of those (to a foreigner) impossible names—Vallabhbhai Jhaverbhai Patel—but the peasants have dubbed him the "Sardar" (a title equivalent to field marshal, though in

his case without military significance), a testimonial to his ability as a "fixer."

In 1915, but for an exuberant activity that would not let him be still and that made him impatient and despotic if not tyrannical, he had shown no sign of the clever organizational quality that, during his later career as chairman of the Congress' Parliamentary Committee, riveted together the Nationalist Juggernaut that has ever since rolled over all opposition like a supertank over muskeg, and made him, as Gandhi's trouble shooter and Lord High Executioner, the most hated man in the party. He has a contempt for oratorical periods and is a poor speaker, either in Hindustani or English, with a vinegary sarcasm that leaves welts where it falls. But his pitiless knock-down-and-drag-out tactics have done the work.

Other chief figures in the struggle of today—Prasad, the modest and beloved; Maulana Abul Kalam (*Maulana* means literally "Freedman" and is properly written, like "Esquire," after the name), the Mecca-born Moslem reformer, who is called "Azad" [The Free]; the late Dr. Mukhtar Ansari—these in 1915 were still youthful. Mukund Jayakar, who in a few years was to pull so strong an oar, had not yet entered public life.

Gandhi's Madras speech, with its big bouquet for the British government, went unnoticed by the Congress, even by the fire-breathing Nationalists, which, taken in connection with the conferring of the Kaiser-i-Hind gold medal, is, to say the least, odd. One would have expected some critical dust to be raised, but the incident remained wrapped in silence, which for a while veiled Gandhi also.

Here was the velvet hand of Gokhale, the brilliant tactician of the Servants of India Society. Sastri and Narayan Joshi, soon to come to the forefront as a labor leader, were among its chief members. Gokhale had seen Gandhi's *Satyagraha* in full operation in South Africa and distrusted its value for India. So did Joshi. The pair had conferred and Gokhale had jockeyed Gandhi into promising to keep hands off politics for a round

year after his return. This explains Gandhi's abstinence from public affairs during 1915.

He made application for membership in the Servants of India, strangely enough in true dictator style, announcing his intention to reform it along rigid lines and under the rule of absolute poverty. This was not the idea of the Society, however, and they declined to take him in. For the time being he went into seclusion.

It was a period, no doubt, of meditation. He had pulled up his roots in South Africa. That chapter of his life was finished. He could look at it now in the perspective of distance and detachment. He must have thought of it with satisfaction. He had won through with *Satyagraha*. It had defeated Smuts and the Union with all its power of entrenched law and ingrained habit. Could it be applied in a larger way to India?

After his youthful teachings his first lessons in soul culture had come to him as a young man in Bombay from the merchant prince Raychandbhai, a learned and devout Hindu whom he brackets with Ruskin and Tolstoy among the chief formative influences of his life. But their paths had long ago gone wide apart. All he knew of politics that he had not taught himself had come from three men, the two mortal enemies, Gokhale and Tilak, and the octogenarian Dadabhai Naoroji, who had initiated Jinnah, when the young Moslem was his private secretary. Naoroji, even before the foundation of the Congress, had agitated against the huge expense of the government, both civil and military, and had inoculated Gandhi with his grievance. Naoroji was now dead.

Tilak, the furious agnostic, to whom the end justified any means, had hated the British for twenty years as the devil hates holy water, and was to hate them and all their works till he died. But though violence has a fascination for the congenitally meek who are unable to use it themselves, and Tilak's very ferocity drew him, Gandhi showed no enmity toward Great Britain. For Gokhale he had more than respect and admiration: he had a great liking. And now, into his meditation came

the news that Gokhale had died in Paris. With him went the chief conservative influence which had swayed Gandhi in the past and to whom he had been looking for counsel in his new career in India.

The death of Gokhale was a catastrophe not only to him but to India certainly and possibly to the world. He understood Gandhi's best and worst. He was perhaps the only man living who could have influenced that strange and erratic personality, and it was he whom Fate took. Gandhi was to be his own guide and counselor henceforth.

There was one other whom Gandhi, with all India, looked up to. This was the Brahman Rabindranath Tagore, the poet and educationalist, to whose International University, the Visva-Bharati, at Santiniketan, near Calcutta, students, male and female, came from every part of India.

The Tagore family is old as the hills and tremendously aristocratic. It settled in Bengal in the seventh century, was in high favor with the Mogul emperors and furnished them many of their most trusted advisers. Rabindranath's prince-grandfather helped the British abolish widow-burning in 1829. His father, Debendranath, who was known as the "Royal Saint," was one of the patrons of the *Brahmo Samaj*, the society whose basic aim is the purification of modern Hinduism. The name Tagore decorates the roll of Indian artists, authors, philosophers and industrialists.

The university is a combination of school and retreat, set in the forest, a place of flowering shrubs, bright-colored birds and tame animals, with classes in the open air under the trees. It has courses in art, in Islamic and Zoroastrian literature, in weaving and carpentering, pottery and tile-making, bookbinding and dressmaking. Its students are taught that to realize God in man one must first become intimate with God in nature. Large and small, they are taught to practice meditation, as pupils in American schools practice spelling and trigonometry. Tagore had not called his university "International" for nothing—it was to be a real union of the teaching of East and West.

He preached—and he had the backing of the Upanishads, which are among the later Vedas and the highest authority for India's system of esoteric philosophy—that “the infinite personality of man can come only from the harmony of all races,” and that India must represent the co-operation of all the world's peoples.

It was to Tagore and Sankinikan that Gandhi went from his period of seclusion in 1915. The poet was then fifty-four, still in his prime. The following year, when he stopped over in Japan on his way to a lecture tour in the United States, I thought him the handsomest man I had ever known—more beautiful even than Cardinal Merry del Val, who had held the palm for masculine pulchritude so long on the Continent—though the silver-gray, which some years later was to make him such an unforgettable figure when I renewed my acquaintance with him in London, had not yet touched his flowing hair and plenteous beard. Six feet three, magnificently chested and thewed, with deep warm brown eyes and a voice like a glass bell, I did not wonder that in his youth he had been dubbed the “Bengali Byron.”

Tagore and Gandhi did not click. The university did not express Gandhi's way of thinking at all. He saw the students sitting on their carpet mats, facing the sunset, in their daily meditation. He watched them assemble in their yellow robes under the trees, with burning of incense and blowing of conch shells, to listen to the poet reciting one of his poetic dramas. He and Tagore, sitting cross-legged in the poet's study overlooking the garden with its citrus and *sal* trees, talked of “shoes and ships and sealing wax and cabbages and kings,” and the more they talked the further they drew apart mentally.

When Gandhi ended his visit he bought a piece of land a few miles from Ahmedabad on the bank of the Sabarmati River and established his own *ashram*, which he named Satyagraha.



## Chapter Ten

### EVOLUTION OF A SAINT

GANDHI'S new *ashram* in India was close to the jail, a special attraction, he used to say, since "jail-going was understood to be the lot of *Satyagrahists*." Adjoining it he planned to build a university of his own, and this was to be nothing like Tagore's—he was no friend to Western teaching. It was to be a forcing bed for only Asiatic tongues and cultures. "India has nothing to learn from the foreigner," was his constant text.

No class or caste was barred from the retreat. It was as catholic as the Congress. It was a neighborhood sensation when he took in an Untouchable family, to the horror of its inmates. Even his wife, who long ago had become the humblest of his worshipers, protested at having to eat with them. He refused to yield, however, though for a while it caused a lamentable shrinkage in the flow of funds from the wellsprings of the pious.

From boyhood Gandhi had objected to the Hindu treatment of the out-castes. In his later student days, when he came to study the Hindu scriptures, this attitude had been bolstered by the discovery (made by Buddha two thousand years before) that they contained no reference to "Untouchability" whatever. The whole thing, he concluded, was an excrescence on the body of Hinduism. He has thus justified his campaign for them on the ground of orthodoxy, which silences even the Brahman and makes the something like fifty million Untouchables very amenable to his teachings. For they, for all their degradation, are inside the Hindu fold: till recent years it seems not to have been brought home to them that it is the caste Hindus that have put and kept them there.

Gandhi was ready enough to admit the crime. "We are all guilty of having oppressed our brothers. We make them crawl on their bellies before us and rub their noses on the ground. With eyes red with rage we push them out of railway carriages. Has the English government ever inflicted anything worse on

us? Indeed, there is no charge that the pariah cannot fling in our faces—and which we do not fling in the face of Englishmen.”

His remedy was a simple one. Let them be made a fifth caste, below the Sudras, but still a caste. Thus the disabilities of their out-caste state would vanish.

At first glance this idea seemed to many of the Untouchables themselves to have its merits. But the wiser ones were not to be won. The Nationalist agitation had reached even them, and they were dreaming of a Free India that was not the traditional one dominated by those who held them unclean. An India of a democratic government, in which their class should have by right its proportion of power.

They had never had a spokesman of their own. Bhimrao Ambedkar, whose name in this year of 1943 is famous in all India, and who speaks for them as neither Gandhi nor the Congress could ever speak, in 1915 was a youthful student of economics and sociology at Columbia University.

Not only in the case of the Untouchables but as regards the whole system of caste, Gandhi kept his Hinduism intact. He held strictly to its *swadeshi*, the birth-fixity of one's social condition. This in effect is the giving of a religious sanction to the line in the prayer book of the Established Church—"In that state of life to which it has pleased God to call them"—that through generations has contributed to the static conditions of service in the Englishman's home so acceptable to the upper classes. In India it is caste. Caste, Gandhi taught, was inherent in human nature; Hinduism merely reduced it to a science. Inter-marriage and inter-dining prevent the rapid evolution of the soul! It seems doubtful if he knew the arguments against the Hindu Sindbad's Old Man of the Sea, for except for the handful of religious volumes which are associated with his early career, he was ill read and contemptuous of books. Caste was Hinduism, and that was enough for him. He nailed his flag to the staff of orthodoxy, which increased the respect of the conservative and insured the support of the higher castes.

There was soon a brisk whirr at Satyagraha Ashram which Ahmedabad had not heard for several generations. Gandhi had begun his Indian ministry with the spinning wheel. He admired the poet Kabir because he had loved its music, and the Emperor Aurangzeb (who murdered his brothers and imprisoned his father Shah Jehan till his death) because he had woven his own caps. He taught that the cure for India's ghastly poverty was the hand loom and spinning wheel. They were within the reach of everyone. If India produced the cloth for its own clothing it would need to buy none. Every inmate of the *ashram* had to spin so many yards of yarn or weave so many feet of homespun every day, or else go hungry.

To me the idea is Gandhi at his realistic best. The spinning wheel is a machine and its popularization the first step in the development of India's Machine Age; but that belongs to the future and it is the present he is concerned with. The peasant starves because he cannot raise enough on his land to feed himself and his family. Let his wife and children help. Except at harvest the wife's time hangs heavy on her hands. What better cure for idleness? With the wheel and hand loom the family can clothe themselves for next to nothing.

Even in the towns and cities a cottage industry could be only a blessing. Caste rules and the *purdah* veil forbid women working in the factory, and labor conditions in cities like Calcutta are just as bad as John Gunther says they are (which is as much the crime of the Indian owners as of the British) and in some of the sugar mills I have visited they are hell. Anyway a skillful woman worker could save as much making *khaddar* cloth in the home as she could earn in any mill.

Mahadev Desai, however, Gandhi's informed private secretary who died last year, concluded that the limited spread of cottage spinning and weaving showed that it could be "no factor in the Indian national economy," which if only on economic grounds seems a great pity. Though to Gandhi the spinning wheel is much more than a cure for poverty. He says quaintly, "In hand spinning is hidden the protection of woman's

virtue." And adds, "When millions take to it as a sacrament, it will turn our faces Godward."

In discovering the spinning wheel to be an annihilator of beggary and a protector of woman's virtue, he has outwitted the British, who have been cunningly keeping the secret from India's unhappy millions for upward of a century!

The Gandhi of the *ashram* was not now the Anglicized product of South Africa and London. He had sloughed off the Western culture. English jacket, trousers, Bond Street bowler, were gone for good. He did not put on the sacred cord, but he let his scalp-lock grow once more. He went back first to the unspeakable *dhoti*, then to the loincloth. He was wholly Indian now. Seated on his carpet square, in the bare planked *ashram*, cross-legged, with shaven head smooth and round as a door-knob and his feet soles upward on his thighs in the lotus posture of the meditating Rishi, twirling the spinning wheel, any one, rich or poor, humble or exalted, could see him night or day.

In the interims of spinning and weaving he held forth on his great doctrine of *Satyagraha*, "truth firmness" or "soul force," however one may choose to render the syllables. Its very base, *Ahimsa*, appealed to the deepest Hindu instinct—to harm no living creature. Not even tigers and cobras. Did not thousands of Yogis live in the forests, and one never heard of wild beasts harming them, not even the lions of the Deccan?

(This, strangely enough, seems to be literally the fact. It is the fear scent that draws attack, and the perfect practice of *Ahimsa* takes away physical fear. That is what the forest dwellers say. In the jungle, before I learned this, I used to be horrified to see naked *sadhus* tramp through the elephant grass that was swarming with poisonous snakes, without a thought of danger. However, not all Indians are holy men. The statisticians tell us that every twenty minutes an Indian dies from snake bite or the attack of a wild animal. And it will be long before Europeans in India try practicing *Ahimsa* on the cobra in the bath-room.)

Yet Gandhi was realistic. He drove away the destructive

monkeys from the *ashram*. He was even known to give an opiate to a hopelessly injured and agonized calf, which raised a ruction among the older fundamentalists of the place.

Perhaps some unscrupulous interviewer will one day venture to ask him whether *Ahimsa* is to be applied to the disease-making animalcules that invade the human blood and tissue. For are not some of them as true *ferae naturae* as any cow? Are we to dose ourselves only for the vegetable bacteria and not the animal infusoria? And what of those amorphous monads which exist on the borderland between the two kingdoms, a puzzle yet to science, that may kill us if we do not kill them? But Gandhi would have his answer pat. Medicine and doctors, he would say, are far greater curses than microbes of any sort.

Medical science, indeed, came in for a fearful wiggling. It was "the concentrated essence of black magic" and quackery was "infinitely preferable to what passes for high medical skill."

"Doctors," said Gandhi, "help people to overindulge themselves. Medicine results in loss of control over mind. Hospitals are institutions for the propagation of sin. They are the instruments the devil has been using for his own purpose to keep his hold on his kingdom. They perpetuate vice, misery, degradation and real slavery. If there were no hospitals for venereal diseases, or even for consumptives, we should have less consumption and less sexual vice amongst us."

Enough to make even what is left of old John of Gaddesden, the English court's first official leech, turn over in the dust of his fourteenth-century grave!

In his *ashram* teaching Gandhi elaborated the extraordinary social and economic doctrines which he had put in hard cold print in his *Hind Swaraj* and which express one side of his strange, twisted egocentric personality.

They seem to stem for the most part from a basic contempt for civilization in general, except for the system developed by the Sanskrit ancestors of the Hindu race, which was Hinduism in its purity. Civilization, as the West knows it, had a satanic nature. It was "the great vice." Mankind had been better off

when his needle was a thorn and his electric bulb a cotton wick in an earthen saucer. The attitude recalls the myopic Lafcadio Hearn and his bitter "Carpets—pianos—lace curtains—brass bands—how I hate them! It is putting a lily in the mouth of hell!"

Not that the new Mahatma made his lecture sound bitter. He had too much humor for that. But he made it bite in. If India found salvation it would be by unlearning all it had learned during the past fifty years. Everything Western would have to go, and the so-called upper classes would have to return to the simple peasant life. (As if there had ever been a time, even before history, when there was no class but the peasantry.)

As for the peasant now, no education should be given him. What could it do for him but make him dissatisfied with his lot? (There is the *swadeshi* swaggering in: "contentment with that state of life to which it has pleased the Lord Siva to call him.") Knowledge of letters would not add an iota to his happiness. There was too much education all around. Macaulay's contraption with its English language had enslaved them all. To educate the young by books produced only lawyers and civil service employees. As for law, the British had given India an obscure and pedantic system which produced swarms of attorneys and barristers to eat the people up. Old India had not needed it. It had had the *Panchayat*, the Village Council, that cost little and made courts and referees unnecessary.

Gandhi had something there. In 1854 when Macaulay put in his educational system, it was all England knew. He had never seen India or made more than a thousand dollars a year by his pen, before the directorate of the old East India Company made him legal adviser of its governing staff in India and its law commissioner, at the princely salary of seventy-five thousand dollars a year—a windfall for him if not for India. As president of its Committee on Public Instruction, the question of an educational system had naturally been in his province. Making the English language its medium had not been his idea alone: the great Indian Ram Mohan Roy had urged it. They

had both thought that if English were taught to boys in centers of population these would be nuclei to spread the language, and the knowledge of the West that went with it, among the people. Sanskrit would be a background classic, as Greek and Latin were in England. But the system of which they gave India a carbon copy was suited neither to its needs nor its capabilities.

And in the long period since it was installed, it has changed as little as Shah Jehan's old Red Fort at Delhi. The American student, even in the most hidebound of our universities, is not wholly a slave of the textbook and examination system. In British India it is still in full swing. "Passing" is largely a matter of cramming, as it was in the mauve decade at Princeton, Yale and Harvard. The man with the best memory gets the best marks. The cleverest of them touches the shining goal of the law office, and the rest, who are the vast majority, have a try at the civil service examinations. It was not India's fault that for many years a bill for compulsory primary education was defeated over and over in the Central Legislature by non-Indian members, that it used to spend on education only half as much as New York State, or that primary schools in India a generation ago numbered less than one to every four villages. It is a different story now: more than twenty years ago education passed wholly into the control of the Indians themselves. But it should have happened long before that.

As for the law which Gandhi would do away with, it is far from perfect. But it is impartial, and it is just as between Indian and Indian. It has put the Untouchables beyond the caprice of their social betters. They had no law at all before the British called them men. If the poor man pays too much for it it is largely because the Indian loves a law case better than his life. Kipling hit off the Hindu to a T in his *Jungle Book*, where the boy Mowgli's father sputters, "If I get the ear of the English, I will bring such a lawsuit as shall eat the village to the bone! They shall pay me twice over! I will have a great justice!" But the law, as Gandhi would approve, is still little heard of in the isolated village. The *Panchayat* he would restore does

not need restoration. It is still in operation. In nine out of ten villages the Council of Elders, the five oldest and chiefest men, settle all quarrels. Though one must suspect that justice often stumbles. Bribery, the great conspirator against British justice in India's courts, is just as rife in the village as in the metropolis, and money talks just as loudly. Perhaps the man who owns the most milch buffaloes is too often found to be in the right.

The young Indian Nationalist in America is fond of citing these village councils. He calls them "the world's earliest examples of democratic government," and argues that a people bred to them must be quite able to govern themselves. But he does not mention (and Gandhi apparently does not know) that some such institution is as natural a growth in every race as the council-pipe of the American redskins; that its prototype has existed among all primitive peoples; that the Saxons had their *witena gemote*, the ancestor of Runnymede and forefather of the British Parliament, with power even to choose and depose the king. As American Minister at Tirana only a few years ago, I saw the Councils of Elders still in operation in High Albania, just as the ancient Illyrians held them before the Romans came in the time of the Caesars, and the Greeks before them. King Zog was replacing them gradually with proper local courts when Mussolini sent his Italian wolves to raven across his borders.

If Gandhi should read the history of the *Panchayat* he would learn that they went no further than the villages, as the trade guilds went no further than the town. No monarch ever based on them a larger democratic system for the government of the population, nor did the people. There never existed any democratic government in the larger sense at all.

It is not strange that the Mahatma's special aversion was for the machine. Mentally he was at the stage of the "frame breakers" agitation in Nottingham, when Lord Byron made his fledgling speech in the House of Lords on the bill providing drastic penalties for the anti-machine Gandhi-ites of his day. He has no comparative history, no knowledge or conception



of the historic era of adjustment that followed. With all his trips to England he seems to have learned nothing of modern conditions of living. The exploitation of the proletariat in English factories that Lloyd George had stormed against he blamed wholly on the machine. Better conditions of labor and fairer distribution of the wealth produced by machinery has improved the whole world, but it has not been by the destruction of that machinery. When Gandhi talked of "the madness of thinking that machinery saves labor," he was a century behind the times. For him Karl Marx might be writing today. "I cannot recall a single good point in connection with machinery," he said—in the same phrase with which he had disposed of parliamentary government. The sewing machine alone he approved, for it could be used in every home, like the spinning wheel.

The blackest machine bogey of all was the railroad. It was a most dangerous institution that was impoverishing the country. If India did not wake up it would be ruined. God had "set a limit to man's locomotive ambition in the construction of his body. It was so made as to require him to restrict his movement to the limit that his hands and feet would take him." God intended him to serve his neighbors, not other races and nations. Railways were taking man further and further from his Maker. Gandhi advised everyone to move to the country, where one could live in an atmosphere unpolluted by them.

He did not restrict his own travel, however, and did much of it, going always third class—an experience which must be tested to be appreciated. The missionaries do so habitually in order to maintain close touch with the people, for which they should be honored above all other foreigners. I set out to try it on one occasion, but a look through the doorway of a third class carriage convinced me I had not the hardihood. .

The poor folk who hung on his words (while they jolted along, sitting cross-legged on the hard benches with their revered fellow passenger) were impressed. For the moment the railroad, which ministered to their innate love of travel and the sight of new things, ceased to be the convenience and

pleasure they had found it all their lives and became one of the foreign dragons that had swallowed the Old India he glorified. If he had told them to do so they would have stopped the train and pulled up the track.

It is more difficult to outline Gandhi's teachings at Satyagraha Ashram as to religion. Perhaps he hardly knew himself at this early period what he believed. We have his word for it that in South Africa he read the Christian Scriptures and "thought earnestly about them." The beauty and purity of the character and life of Jesus "tremendously" attracted him. But eventually he concluded that there was nothing in the Bible that was not to be found in the sacred Scriptures of Hinduism. As he put it, "Jesus caught a breath of wind from Asia and gave it to the world. It has been diluted in the West." He was a Hindu, and salvation was possible to him only through Hinduism.

Gandhi the Saint has made love for all men the cornerstone of his teaching. He insists that it is not the British he hates, but their vices. To him perfect love can overcome all things. He really believes that, if he could come into contact with them, he could convert Hitler to pacifism and repentance by an appeal to his better nature, and cause Hirohito (who to him is a ruling monarch like the King-Emperor, instead of a puppet immured in a palace tomb by a military hierarchy which in all but name has restored the shabby and discarded Shogunate) to call back his shamed marshals and admirals to Tokyo!

Flashes of Gandhi's many-sided mind come to us from his recorded *ashram* sayings: "I worship God as Truth only. . . . God is Life, Truth and Light. . . . He is Love. He is the supreme Good." (Here is Mary Baker Eddy.) "I perceive that there is, underlying all change, a living power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves and recreates. That informing power is God. (All deistic philosophers.) "The soul never dies. The souls of the living as well as the dead are all one." (The higher pantheism.) "Suffering is an eternal law. Life comes out of death. The purer the suffering the greater the progress." (Transmigration and *Karma*.) He believes that

man leads many lives in many incarnations, that the soul after death immediately finds itself a new home.

The simplest and after all the most satisfactory statement of his creed Gandhi made to a man I know—an American journalist of note—who was sent by his ambitious paper all the way to India to interview him on the subject of his religious faith. It was only four words: "I know God is." All the correspondent's wit could cajole no more out of Gandhi. He holds to date the double record for the shortest interview and the longest expense account. One wonders how his managing editor squared himself with the big boss.

Gandhi's diet was simple—nuts, an occasional spoonful of honey, chopped green vegetables with garlic (of which the foreign visitor was not unaware), orange juice, tomatoes, mangoes, dates, with curds and goat's milk. Long ago, in South Africa, he had taken a vow to drink no milk, since it was not strictly a vegetarian food (yet for that matter, Nature prescribes mother's milk for us all), but a persistent dysentery led his wife to beg that he take meat broth. One scholar among his following argued vainly that the Vedas sanctioned it. Milk, then, anxious Kasturbai urged, vow or no vow. Impossible! Goat's milk, she persisted. He had never tasted that; when he took the vow, it had manifestly been directed against cow's milk. He would be within the letter of the law. After a terrific struggle with his conscience he yielded. We are told that he was never afterward to be free from remorse.

He slept in those days only four hours of the sun-round, a practice not as uncommon as one might suppose. Napoleon slept little more, nor did Asquith. He kept a weekly day of silence, when all conversation, however pressing the need, was tabu. At half-past four each morning he had a season of prayer and again at sunset. In the latter all the inmates joined, and after a time the people of the neighborhood took to coming, sitting quietly in the garden, content to look on, belike to catch some of the droppings from the sanctuary.

He was as approachable as all outdoors. This has remained

his policy to this day. When he is out of jail he will receive anybody. I cannot imagine his declining to be interviewed ad lib by anyone, whether the interviewer's name is to be found in Who's Who or not. He is fifty times more accessible than Henry Ford, or Mayor La Guardia, or Bernard Shaw, or Cary Grant. He is the American correspondent's dream.

What especially endeared him to a people with whom sexuality is unbridled from earliest youth was his superiority to it. His tendency to asceticism had shown itself very early. Married at thirteen, the custom of his race and country, he "took no time," as he says, "in assuming the authority of a husband." But a change had come with a night in his boyhood of which he tells in that naïve life story of his. It was the last night of his father's life. He had nursed him almost without rest or sleep, but that night desire took him by the throat. He slipped away to the next room to his wife's arms, and in the moment of their pleasure the knock came at the door. His father was dead. The hour of license seared his soul with a sense of guilt he was never to forget.

When he came back from his London studies the girl wife he had left was a buxom woman with a jeweled nose ring and a "no-widow" mark on her forehead. And a son four years old. She had been in love with her brilliant barrister husband, and she was a comely person. But he was colder, with a reserve she associated only with holy and uninviting anchorites. She could not understand this. She thought the boy husband she had sported with as a girl of twelve showed a strange way now to show love and pride! Since then he had practiced continence.

Is the modern birth control on a higher plane? Like Tolstoy he taught that sexual intercourse should serve only the needs of reproduction. And who is wise enough to say this would not mark a step upward in human progress? What if all-wise Nature has gifted the spousal embrace with ecstasy only that man's increasing wisdom shall not lead him, like the American Shakers, to an abstention ultimately fatal to a continuing posterity?

But St. Paul's tolerant admonition, "Defraud ye not one the other except it be with consent for a time that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer," was not enough for Gandhi. In the Transvaal he had taken the vow of perpetual chastity. If he was to devote his life (and incidentally his wife's life) to the cause of humanity, they "must stop having children." And in his autobiography he has recorded for the world to read that "she has never stood in the way of my endeavor to lead a life of restraint." One must be grateful for his command of felicitous English.

His conclusion, however, carried him very far. "Those who want to perform national service, or to have a gleam of the real religious life, must lead a celibate life, whether married or single." To assign all real religious living to priest and nun is to deny human experience, a piece of arrogance shocking even in a Mahatma [Great Soul], for this was the title the people had now conferred upon him.

Byron, who found roast beef made him "ferocious," used to diet to increase his mental lucidity. Gandhi in the same way developed the habit of fasting (used in South Africa as a penitential exercise) to sublimate sexual desire and increase the power of his subconscious self to hear the "Inner Voices" which at this time began to counsel him, as Socrates was counseled by his Daemon and Jeanne d'Arc by her visions. He employed his fasts at Satyagraha Ashram otherwise, sometimes with harrowing results. All its inmates being vowed to poverty, none could own any personal property. On one occasion when he discovered that his wife had laid by a few rupees, to the value of about eight dollars, for some purpose she thought a worthy one, he fasted three days and in addition (possibly that there should be no doubt of her repentance) printed a leader in *Young India*, a weekly publication he had founded, printed in English, under the caption "My Shame and Sorrow," in which he pilloried her for public reprobation. Fancy that happening to an American wife!

This is the first of a number of instances, recorded with

admiration by some American and British as well as native apologists, which suggest that the "most tender soul in all the world" of the earlier South African scenes had acquired with the years a certain hardness that on occasion could be ruthless, and that something of the inflexible quality of the dictator had come to the man who then had been "humble in spirit as a little child."

Nineteen-fifteen drew on and for London the war bedimmed everything but itself. Indian troops were showing reckless bravery in France and Flanders. The Congress held its session in Bombay, and though there had been no sign of active interest from Gandhi, who was not a member, it showed a lively sense of his presence in India by nominating him *in absentia* for its Working Committee. Even his name would be an asset to the party. It carried further every day, among high and low. It was not only Ahmedabad now, not only the peasantry: people were coming to him from all over India. Beyond question emissaries came from the Congress—it would be interesting to know about that. But politics and he, outwardly at least, were strangers. He carried out his promise to the dead Gokhale with scrupulous care during the round year.

It was a new saint that with 1916 emerged at Satyagraha Ashram, one that was unlike any of the conventional patterns of piety that history has known, even in India where saints are of frequent appearance. A bizarre, Dostoyevskian saint of quirks and crotchets and contradictions, and to the Indians, who, as Tagore said, are the most incurably religious of all peoples, the oddities of a true saint, however *outré*, are in India accounted badges of his saintliness. Hindus of all ranks and stations and castes knocked at the *ashram* door. And as with the Syrians who flocked to see Simon Stylites perched atop his pillar, it was the few who came from mere curiosity: the many came to ask his blessing.

Every generation or so a new saint appears in some one of India's innumerable villages, discovered always by the same method, if applied by ignorant natives rather than by cultured

foreigners. Mrs. Besant a dozen years later was to try it on with the discovery of her Jiddu Krishnamurti, who, if not a saint, was as gifted a boy prodigy as I ever listened to. Gandhi is the latest of a long line that will no doubt go on forever, that has held Gautama of the Buddhists, Mahavira of the Jains, Baba Nanak, first Guru of the Sikhs, and a hundred others great and small whom you and I will possibly never hear of, but who centuries hence will have garlands hung upon their Hindu shrines.

Their worshipers, too, will never have heard of Mormonism, yet America will not lack Latter-Day Saints to whom Joseph Smith was the anointed of God.

## Chapter Eleven

### THE YOUNG LOCHINVAR

WITH the close of 1915 there was a lull in the *ashram* activities. Gandhi was free from his promise to Gokhale to abstain from politics for a year. The bar was down.

For his first move he chose a subject that was distinctly up his street. That was the old South African ulcer of the labor-indenture system in South Africa, that had bred for the Indians there the evils against which he had drafted his first manifesto over twenty years before. The Pandit Malaviya, the Defender of the Faith of Hinduism, at his behest brought before the Imperial Legislative Council a resolution to do away with the system entirely.

Hardinge, the Viceroy, little realizing what was in store for him, hedged. It would be abolished, he announced, "in due course." Time was necessary for "adjustments." Gandhi was familiar with the phrase. He wanted a definite date, which was not forthcoming. That fact was all he needed for an auspicious beginning. He plunged, one fancies joyously, into battle. He did not consult the Congress but went off the deep end on his own and toured India for a mass agitation. The Congress leaders responded enthusiastically: this was the Gandhi they had been hoping for. The tour brought his name to the foreground with a rush. The stories of his South African labors were revamped in the vernacular press. The Indian Government remembered his old campaigns in India on the same business, and the "adjustments" were considered. Eventually the indenture system was abolished. Gandhi had made his first score.

Meanwhile Tilak, who had been in jail and was now out again, and out of the Congress too, had founded a Home Rule League, and Mrs. Besant, not to be outdone, had founded another. The Congress and the Moslem League, the lion and the lamb, had united in a Home Rule program. When the Congress met next year, at Lucknow, Gandhi was there and was



appointed *viva voce* to its Working Committee. Jinnah, president of the League, was there too. Tilak made a triumphal entry. But the power had gone out of the Moderates. There was no real leader—unless it was that *esprit* in petticoats, Mrs. Besant. There was little for Gandhi to do and he did it.

If for nothing else, however, the Congress of 1916 was memorable for his first meeting with Jawaharlal Nehru, the son of the Pandit. Jawaharlal had come back from London three years before, fresh from Harrow and honors at Trinity College, Cambridge, and with a barrister's degree of the Middle Temple. Born with a solid silver spoon in his mouth, he had never known a day of poverty. By birth and fortune he belonged with the gilded young hedonists of that London era who later came to be called "the bright young people."

On his arrival he had gone, naturally, into his father's office. But the law did not attract him. He had felt like a fish out of water. Then the ferment of the Congress had drawn him.

It spraddled all over the country now, north, south, east and west, one year in a big city, Bombay, Madras or Calcutta, and the next in a hamlet of thatched mud huts. It welcomed everyone: Hindus of every caste from high Brahman to Untouchable, Moslems, Sikhs, Parsees, Christians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans, lawyers and farmers, mill owners and mill workers, intellectuals and illiterates, millionaires and loafers, terrorists and anarchists, holy men and fanatics, students, visionaries and politicians. It had room for every persuasion. In some provinces the Congress Party was growing to be the party of the gentry, in others that of the laborer and the peasant. It had become a huge affair, a tent city of banners and tocsins and welling oratory, a combination of political convention, old-time camp meeting and Nazi Bund-picnic. Thousands of delegates attended its sessions, and wherever it came the countryside, men and women, old and young, for many miles around moved in on it to see the excitement.

The proceedings had grown less decorous than in its early days of the top hats and knife-pleated trousers and polite and

polished addresses. It had its hours of rough-house. Not as bad, perhaps, as the United States Senate of the time, where "Pitchfork Bill" Tillman was making the throwing of inkwells a popular diversion, but enough to ruffle the dignity of the older Moderates.

Its diversity of interests did not make for unity of purpose. It had reached the point where it could act as a unit only on a pretentious and popular nationalistic policy such as was furnished by the broadening and deepening anti-British program. Only this has made the Congress, as it has been constituted of late years, possible. If this fails it will be finished, with its leaders marooned on the Isle of Lost Causes.

Jawaharlal Nehru had gone to the session of 1912 as a delegate, and it had welcomed him. With his great name and the standing of his father, he was the "Young Lochinvar come out of the West." When he was a boy the Congress had been only a big booming confusion over the horizon: now, with his father one of the props of the Moderates against the rising Extremist tide, seeing it from the inside fascinated him. But he had been for a long time a silent spectator.

Motilal had always supported the Congress without approving its ultranationalistic temper, but Jawaharlal was not quite the chip off the old block.

Of all the prominent figures, beside his father whom he so passionately admired, he had been most impressed by silver-haired, Irish Mrs. Besant. A boyish dabbling in theosophy with his Irish tutor had possibly predisposed him to the liking, which had rapidly become a sincere admiration. He had joined her Home Rule League with alacrity, and when during the war she was interned, indignation consumed him. This was youthful enthusiasm, a quality that with the mounting years Jawaharlal has never lost. It is one of his greatest assets.

He admired also the Hyderabad poetess, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the "Indian Nightingale," whose speeches were bringing her to the front. Mrs. Naidu's father was a scientist of some note and she herself in her own way is a power in India today, where her

name is equally well known for her poetry and for her devotion to Gandhi, from whom she is as inseparable as his *khaddar* shawl and his flask of goat's milk. She is of the Brahman caste but married a Sudra.

She attended King's College in London, and is one of Cambridge's most celebrated "Girton girls." She was an ardent feminist and a Nationalist before Gandhi dawned on India's political horizon, and has a natural flair for the platform that made her one of the Congress' official orators. In 1925 she was its president. She is one of the most effective woman speakers I have heard in any country and, for one who is neither slender nor tall, is the embodiment of grace. She has a fetching trick of using a scarf, winding it now about her shoulders and now around her ample waist, in a gauzy fan-dance effect that takes the place of gestures. She is vehement and, like Gandhi, has an ebullient humor that makes her well worth listening to even by one who takes no stock in what she says. She jocularly refers to herself as "an old jailbird," though jail is not her *métier* and she finally achieved it only in 1930. Since then she has been interned four times.

She is an Indian Madame de Staël, a past mistress of table talk and repartee, and her at-homes are enlivening. For public affairs she affects the *khaddar*, but not for her teas. No indeed. The loveliest saris of the bazaars are in service when she sits on the divan waving a crumpe, with olive-skinned Indians and young newspapermen hovering about her. She expressed herself perfectly in a five-word sentence she once wrote: "The one sin is fear." In ten minutes chat with her one sees that there is a generous spice of revolutionist in her make-up. It did not surprise me to learn in 1916 that her brother, Mr. Chattopadhyaya, was in Germany, directing a subversive organization and furnishing seditious literature to Indian prisoners of war.

In those early days it was Mrs. Naidu's emotional patriotism that caught the young Nehru. She begged him to take up public speaking, but there was nothing he hated more. He still recalls with embarrassment his first halting speech made in Allahabad,

at a mass meeting called to protest against a press-control law, when as he sat down Sir Tej Saprú, the famous Liberal, kissed him on the cheek in delight that he had broken the ice. Speechifying was the Congress' long suit and Saprú counted the son of his old friend Motilal an acquisition to his forces. As it turned out he was counting a bit without his host. The young man himself thought he had no gift for oratory. He had always envied his father that possession.

As a public speaker he did not discover himself till 1920, when he first made the acquaintance of the Indian village, which is the first requisite for anyone, native or foreigner, who wants to understand the country.

The village is India's chief institution and its unloveliest one. A cluster of misshapen huts with walls of cobbles set in mud and crazy straw-topped roofs. Public square, with the common well and a few priceless trees for shade, noisy with gagging geese and half-naked boys wild as buffalo calves, and with bead charms sewn around their necks against the evil eye. Beldames with faces as vacant as a baby's yawn, crouching in doorways delousing one another's heads. Pot-bellied infants wearing only a cherubic expression and a tiny silver chain about their hips from which dangles a flat, heart-shaped tin pendant for a fig leaf. (Never look admiringly at a child in India: it may attract the notice of a lurking demon who will steal away its soul.) At one side, raised a foot above the steaming earth, the plank platform polished by the naked foot-palms of a hundred years, where in the "cow-dust hour," when the children drive the buffaloes home from their mud wallows, the village graybeards squat, pulling at their *hookahs* under the sacred *pepul* tree, with the village cobra's hole between its sprangling roots.

It was Nehru's first real introduction to his own land's piteous and overwhelming poverty. He had known no more about the desperate conditions in its villages than the average dweller on New York's Park Avenue knows about the squatters of the Tennessee mountains, or than some Manhattanese know of Harlem. For the first time he was in hand-touch with a teeming

population that literally did not have a square meal from one year's end to another, and the thing struck him like a physical blow. In the Allahabad countryside the landlord system was at its brazenest.

Pure accident had been back of his trip. There had been a kind of hunger march on the city, after the pattern of the old-time descent upon Washington of the historic Coxey's Army, the local Coxey being one Ramachandra, a laborer with a bent for organization and a gift of natural eloquence that marked him for a leader of his kind. He had aroused some two hundred peasants to this unheard-of protest, and the sight of it had caught Nehru on the raw.

Accompanied by two of his friends, he went back with the tattered company to their villages, distant from the railroad and off the line of travel, and stayed some days, gathering the people together, talking with them, sleeping on the mud floors of their dingy huts, soaking in their misery. The experience had an enormous effect on him. When he left Allahabad he had been scarcely more than a playboy with a particularly active political bee in his bonnet. He came back a socialist. From that time independence for India and socialism have been merged in all his thinking. He cannot talk of either one separately. He admits that it was these talks to the illiterate farmer crowds that taught him his oratory, that clear, direct and astonishingly effective presentation that underlies his most passionate periods.

At that first of Gandhi's Congresses Jawaharlal has recorded that the Mahatma "seemed very distant and different and unpolitical to many of us young men." He declined to take more than a passive part in its activities or in national politics. Yet Nehru was fascinated by the deference paid him and by his directness and cogent logic on the few occasions when he spoke. He sensed the force under the quiet *ashram* mask. But he was fascinated, too, by Tilak's fire and vigor. In essence it was more his kind. And the blunt, uncompromising Nationalist program appealed to him.

At that time he was twenty-three, slim and handsome and

shaped like a runner (he has taken on weight with the years), with a soft and persuasive voice. I think of him as an Indian John Reed, for Reed had a like background of wealthy habit, social prominence and Harvard. Nehru now might even be another good-looking John Reed of Portland, Oregon, grown up, so far as looks go. The parallelism runs far: both wrote poems, both turned radical, both suffered arrest for incendiary speeches, both went to Russia. In the Indian author of *Toward Freedom* there is much of the man who wrote *Red Russia* and *Knit a Strait-Jacket for Your Soldier Boy*. Nehru the mob leader and jail habitué is a replica of the Reed who threw the pageant party for the Paterson strikers in Madison Square Garden, tramped with Pancho Villa's tattered mob in Mexico, and cheered the revolutionaries in Russia. Bertrand Russell wrote for Reed no less than for Nehru, and if he had been old enough Reed would have had the same admiration for Sir Roger Casement's speech at his trial.

The Jawaharlal Nehru of the present is a man pulled two ways. By birth, blood and tradition he is Indian, but in spirit and temperament he is Western. His tragedy is that he must think with an Eastern mind, but as Westerns think. While his face is turned east, every instinct, every appetite, draws him in the opposite direction, and he fights this urge ferociously. One sees why he has said that he is an exile in India. Nature has made him that. "I have tried to forget that I am a Kashmiri Brahman," he says, "and I have almost done so. I am only an Indian now." But try as he will he can never be one of the people. There is too much of the aristocrat in him and he cannot get rid of it. He has always had Gokhale's intellectual aloofness, but without its cold and contemplative quality. I have seen him pleased and disappointed, gleeful and hopping mad—always he is surcharged, like an electric battery, and like the battery ready to administer a shock if he is carelessly handled.

Though he has been known during a campaign to make thirty speeches in a single day, Nehru has never learned really to like public speaking. He is happiest with his pen in his hand. He is

a facile writer and a master of exquisite English. No one could read his admired autobiography and not be caught by its grace of style, the richness of its vocabulary. Some of its paragraphs, once read, cannot easily be forgotten. And certain lines of his poems cling like burrs to the memory:

I drew these tides of men into my hands,  
And wrote my will across the sky in stars.

Here is the meticulous choice of the singing syllables. Incidentally these lines occur in a magazine article written by Nehru anonymously, in criticism of himself.

At this first meeting of Gandhi and the man who was to become his right bower in the long game, poles apart as they were, the live spark must have leaped across. Nehru, with his vigorous youth and passionate sense of reality, was the perfect complement to the lean brown Gandhi, growing a bit bowed and grizzled now, who had sat that year in the *ashram* spinning his yarn and his plans.

Like draws like, and sometimes, curiously, unlike attracts unlike. One can hardly fancy a pair more different in their ideas. Ever since they met they have disagreed on almost everything, including the best way to free India. Gandhi, with all his apparent breadth of religious belief, is in practice a hard-shell Hindu. Nehru is a modernist and an agnostic: he may think of God—most thinking men do—but he talks openly about Him no more than the man with whose wife your wife plays bridge. I have never heard of his fasting or taking time out for a spot of meditation. He has never liked Gandhi's "dragging in religion." To him it "smacks of 'revival.'" He disapproves this use of religion for political purposes whether by Hindu or Moslem.

Gandhi holds unswervingly to the laws of caste; Nehru cares nothing about them. His wife, who died in her thirties in Switzerland of tuberculosis, was not a Hindu but a Parsee. His love for her is embalmed in the touching dedication of his *Toward Freedom*—"To Kamala, who is no more."

There could be no disagreement between Gandhi and Nehru on the score of economics, of which the Mahatma knows nothing whatever and Nehru very little. "I want India's money, in the imperial Bank of England," says Gandhi, "distributed equally among the villages. They will then voluntarily co-operate. If the peasants are masters of their own money they will use it as they think best." With the exception of a few such off-the-record statements, his theories on money, exchange, banking and commercialism in general are handed him by the wealthy coterie of mill owners who are his patrons, such as Ghanshyamdas Birla, the financial wizard, managing director of Birla Brothers, owners of jute and cotton mills and sugar factories galore, who has always been one of his dependables.

Gandhi thrives on opposition and has a disconcerting way of getting what he wants. In the end he got the Nehrus, both of them. But for a time the old man held back with the safe Moderate crowd.

In fact the great majority of the serious-minded Indians in and out of the Congress at that time were more than doubtful of the new Mahatma and took small stock in his theories. Malaviya stood, a beetle-browed, lowering, intractable figure, foursquare against any new ideas so far as Hinduism was concerned. A couple of years more and his child, the *Mahasabha*, was to be founded, to drive a new wedge between Hindu and Moslem. Over twenty years before he had had the vision to back a movement to revive village industries, but he was not taken with Gandhi's spinning wheel.

Tagore did not mince matters. He was no medievalist. From his peaceful retreat at Santiniketan he had told the world that for India to return to a dead-and-done simplicity would be spiritual suicide. Let Gandhi offer something not to destroy but to replace or reframe the present economic system. Was Gandhi's "spin and weave" the gospel of a new creative age? If the large machinery of the West had been a curse to it, would not small machines be a peril to India? Gandhi's life had been only another word for self-sacrifice, but his homespun program



But young Nehru, like Gandhi, had a vision, and each recognized it in the other.

Gandhi did not need help—yet. He was as quiet as a mouse, and let the noise of Mrs. Besant's Home Rule movement, which was to make her president of the next year's Congress and which by that time was going like a house afire, pass over his head. He was ready now for the first tryout of his *Satyagraha*, quite on his own, and a possible opportunity, ready made, was at his hand. There was talk of scandalous labor conditions in the Champaran indigo plantations in Bihar, far to the north, on the edge of the Himalayas, and he went there.

The planters were a hardened lot. Laborers got five cents a day, their women three, and children toiled from sunrise to sunset for a couple of coppers. The law compelled tenants to plant one seventh of their land in indigo. The Congress was unknown there, but Gandhi's name was not. He agitated to such purpose that the district magistrate ordered him to leave. To court arrest he refused and was arraigned. He pleaded guilty and read a statement in court that went the length and breadth of India. The charge was dismissed. He called it "a red-letter day to me."

He drummed up women teachers and a doctor, opened schools, taught the people hygiene and treated their skin diseases. The planters organized a poisonous counter-agitation and under pressure the "bullying" Bihar government ordered him to quit the district. Again he refused. This time he was not arrested. The lieutenant governor was canny. He, too, had heard of Gandhi, and no doubt Government House in Calcutta had a dossier also by this time. He appointed a committee which abolished the system, that had existed for more than a century. Gandhi knew the virtue of a good cause. But this one had been almost too good. The outcome left him where he had started from.

A later chance came in Kaira District, in his own province of Gujarat, where the crops had failed and the government had neglected to lift the tax as was in its option when crops were less than one fourth the normal. He lost no time in de-

claring *Satyagraha*, but again the authorities outwitted him: they compromised the matter by lifting the tax for the poorest peasants.

A local economic contest meanwhile had given him the idea of using the fast, so often to be employed in his later career, as a weapon against entrenched authority. Ahmedabad, the place of his *ashram*, was disturbed by a strike in its Indian-owned mills, and he had championed the strikers' cause. Some of the owners were his friends, but he could not move them. After a fortnight of lockout the strikers were on the point of surrender. "One morning," his autobiography tells us, "the light came to me." He announced that he would take no food till a settlement was reached. On the fourth day the owners capitulated. The incident received great publicity both in India and abroad, and Gandhi had a new and potent political weapon. If it could defeat the mill owners, it could be used even against the government.

The Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, had noted the rising of the new star of the people. He invited him to take part with other leaders in a war conference in Delhi. India had sent a million and a quarter men overseas and there had been a hundred thousand casualties. The Allies' situation was critical. And this flattering invitation to Gandhi the Saint called for a difficult decision from Gandhi the Politician.

For when Lord Lothian in London called him both saint and politician he had made no mistake. Gandhi is both, and it is often difficult to say where one begins and the other leaves off. The effect is that of a true schizophrenia, the malady of the split personality, in which at times control passes with baffling rapidity. We must consider him in this binomial guise or give up understanding him at all.

It is this double aspect, with the curious inconsistencies which spring from it, that make him a puzzle. To the Indian's delight; they count his inscrutability to the Western mind a triumph for the mystic East, and it offends them when Jawaharlal Nehru comes out flat-footed and admits that the little Mahatma puzzles him no less. Of all the phrases the West has coined, the "Mys-

terious East" is the only one that wholly pleases them. They have never forgiven Kipling for his alleged "White Man's Burden," though this apparently has been saddled on him. For, the last time I saw him alive, which was in Paris in 1927, over a cup of chocolate in Galignani's tearoom, I ragged him about it, and he said with emphasis that he had *not* invented the phrase. He said it was almost a cliché when he first used it. He said the same of "But that's another story," too. However, like the "Widow at Windsor" which lost him a peerage, both will no doubt cling to his name longer than Kim will.

The Viceroy's invitation to the war conference put Gandhi between the horns of a dilemma. For an outside issue had meanwhile arisen in which he was now involved. This was the so-called Khilafat cause. Ever since Italy had leaped on Turkish Tripoli like a cougar in the dark and the Balkan States had attacked Turkey, the Moslems, world over, had been suspicious of Christendom. They were in no mind to have the Christian Powers dismember Islam and leave them a landless race like the Jews. To the Indian Moslems the Sultan was Islam's khalif, their religious head, and Turkey was the main stronghold of the faith. It was to them as Jerusalem was in the days of its power to the Jews of Alexandria. One can understand that to be loyal to Great Britain, its foe, was a strain on them. Two Indian Moslems of some note, the Ali brothers, were so vehement about it that they had been interned. The folly of striving to please everyone dawns eventually on every politician, but it had not yet dawned on Gandhi, and he had openly given the brothers his sympathy. To the Viceroy he made the Ali brothers' imprisonment a cause for hesitation.

Chelmsford, being somewhat of a politician himself, no doubt understood. He made the perfect answer: "You believe that India has on the whole been the gainer by the British connection. Is it not your duty then, as an Indian, to help the empire now? Raise any moral issue you please after the war is over. But not now."

This was putting it straight up to Gandhi's loyalty and he

had no answer for it. He took part in the conference and supported a resolution for Indian recruiting. It set him right with the Indian Government, whatever the Moslems may have thought of it. He counted it well done when Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, made his famous statement to the Commons: "The policy of His Majesty's government is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire." This was a step forward indeed!

In both Bihar and Gujarat Gandhi worked serenely for his recruiting, though it puzzled the simple peasants no end. Some of them even dared to heckle him. Here was the great apostle of *Ahimsa* calling on them to kill their fellow men! They did not understand the twists and turns of politics. In anyone but a saint and a mahatma it would have seemed two-faced. He has since written that it was at the Champaran indigo plantations that he first determined that British rule must end. Yet now, months after that, he is writing the Viceroy, "I love the English nation, and I wish to evoke in every Indian the loyalty to Englishmen"!

This should puzzle more than simple peasants.

## *Chapter Twelve*

### SHADOW OF AMRITSAR

THE United States entered the war in 1917, and the next year saw the Armistice. The Nationalist platform, openly declared while the war was still on, called for a full partnership in the empire, like Canada, Australia and South Africa, a dominion overseas. No suggestion had come from the India Office that this was too lofty an ambition. In fact, in the flush of the victory, Lloyd George had made no bones of saying, "By its remarkable contribution to our triumph India has won a new claim to our consideration, a claim so irresistible that it ought to overpower and must overpower all the prejudice and timidity which might stand in the way of its progress." The Indian leaders, except the extremest Extremists, who wanted Great Britain not merely out but kicked out, counted the battle as won—almost—and the yearned-for dominion status only a matter of a little time.

But as the Peace Conference and the Versailles negotiations dragged on, it became clear that the old tactics of procrastination that had flooded the reservoir of Indian resentment were still to prevail. If there had been some sky-sign of better weather, some tiny whiff of hope on the breeze! But instead there was a thickening atmosphere in London.

Montagu had toured India five years before and had been Undersecretary for India before that. He was a young man, still in his thirties, far-seeing and keen for reforms. But he had the Indian politicians to work with and his bent was toward compromise. Also he had arrayed against him the phalanx of arrogance. The Viceroy, Lord Birkenhead, Lord Curzon, Churchill—they could not see a day coming when England's firm hold could be relaxed. When she could "abandon her trust" was the way they put it.

It had been a mistake for the Indian Government to let Tilak out. He had gone instantly back to his preaching. Wholesale

terrorism went on in Bengal, with intimidation of witnesses. In other provinces, especially the Punjab, disorders grew. The Indian Government appointed a committee to explore the impasse. Lacking in imagination, the committee recommended that some of the extraordinary powers given the government during the war by the Defence of India Act should be retained. This seemed necessary because the lapse of the Act, with the war's close, would automatically release a flock of anarchistic Extremist organizers. But it meant, incidentally, the extension into peace times of trial of suspected persons by special courts without juries, in effect an indefinite state of martial law. Under it an Indian accused of revolutionary propaganda, even of having in his possession a suspicious document, could be imprisoned without formal charges, let alone without trial, and held incommunicado at the Viceroy's pleasure.

This was the report on which the opprobrious Rowlatt bills were based. The proposal to enact them was asking for trouble, but the government got much more of it than it deserved. The Act was to be put in operation only in districts where anarchy or revolution was rife and then only by special sanction. But the Nationalists circulated rumors that under it no marriage could be made without government permission, that no one could own more than a certain amount of land, that the police could arrest any three men found conversing together, with a hundred other distortions quite as absurd, that inflamed the people who could not read. Both sides seem to have been equally shortsighted. If the Indian Government made any consistent effort to kill these rumors it was not effective, and the Moderates let the people believe them. It was all grist for their mill. They joined, indeed, in the roar of vituperation.

In the light of what followed it is easy to say that the legislation was ill judged. Perhaps the long era of open sedition, arm in arm with assassination, was fraying the British patience. Something had to be done without delay. The wartime legislation existed and to use it seemed to offer less difficulties than new laws would obviously imply. But it set against the govern-

ment many Indians of standing and influence who were to be sadly missed. The Right Honorable Sankaran Nair of the Executive Council was one of these. He resigned his seat in protest.

This time the Inner Voice spoke to Gandhi in his dreaming hours. "I was still in that twilight condition between sleep and consciousness," he writes, "when suddenly the idea broke upon me—it was as if in a dream—that we should call on the country to call a general *hartal*." He announced an era of "Passive Resistance" if the bills passed, and toured the country on it, laying a train of powder that needed only a spark to set it ablaze. He organized roving bands of the youthful intelligentsia, who took the vow of poverty and traveled third class throughout the country preaching his campaign, supported by the people as they went. He was the Mahatma still, though a fighting one, and as such the masses were ready to follow him.

The agitation was a "Stop! Look! Listen!" for the government that might have accomplished its purpose as regards the proposed legislation. But Gandhi did not wait for that. The Saint was fading and the Politician was taking over. The politician's next step made it difficult for the government to back water. Gandhi published a pledge which he asked all Indians to sign, binding the signers to "refuse civilly to obey these laws, if enacted, and such other laws as a committee to be hereafter appointed may think fit," and affirming further that they would "faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person and property." He thus put himself at the forefront of a lawless movement that the authorities could not ignore.

There was a sharp difference of opinion among the rank and file of the Congress as to this pledge. The Tilak crowd foamed with joy. The old guard of the *Mahasabha*, Malaviya at their head, shut their teeth and waited to see what would happen, while a portion of the Moderate following in disapproval split off and formed the National Liberal Federation, for the time a nondescript and ineffective group. But Rajagopalachari, the quick and witty southern leader, upheld the revolt; he was soon

in the campaign as deep as anyone. Patel, who used to sneer at Gandhi, had stopped sneering: now, in his mid-forties, he had come under the Mahatma's spell, as had so many of the younger Moderates. Of the out-and-out Nationalists, Mrs. Besant was the only one who had no illusions about Gandhi. She solemnly warned him that nothing but evil would come of the step.

Young Jawaharlal Nehru had been holding back under his father's influence, but the Rowlatt business swept him off his feet. It made him an Extremist overnight. He went all out for the pledge, with the Congress' organized mob leaders. It was his first whirlwind tour—he has made many since—and this time it was not to the farmers. Up and down he went, rampaging through the cities and larger towns, as explosively as Tilak. Though not in Tilak's style: his was not the bludgeon, but the rapier. His invective was Tilak's, but it was couched in polished elegance. With his sumptuous clothes and Cambridge accent he must have captivated the unlicked crowds as the debonair Jimmie Walker, the *arbiter elegantiarum* of the Tammany Hall of not so long ago, with his dapper waistcoat and alien ease, fascinated the Bowery heelers of his day.

Motilal, his father, opposed Gandhi's action. He thought it immature and provocative, as it was. He was disturbed for the sake of Jawaharlal, for his career. The thought of his fastidious son, haranguing with the student riffraff and the Tilak howlers, and perhaps being haled to a verminous jail, was more than he could bear. He went to Gandhi and begged him to intercede. Gandhi obligingly did so, advising the young man to go more slowly for his father's sake. But Jawaharlal had the bit in his teeth.

There was a rift between father and son for a time, the first they had known. Even when the older man, who had had a diabolical temper in his earlier years, had thrashed him within an inch of his boyish life, it had not affected Jawaharlal's admiration for him. But in his fury of anger at the government he was chilled at Motilal's acquiescence in the outrage. It was not till he discovered that his father was spending his nights



sleeping on the bare floor, to see what his idolized son would feel like in the jail to which he was bound, that Jawaharlal melted and disciplined his ardor.

It was time, for the very day of the pledge-taking the police and the crowds came to blows. The police fired on them and there was loss of life.

There was nothing the government could do, however, to the prime mover in the plan. Passive Resistance is a negative thing, and Gandhi had made non-violence an integral part of the pledge. When he called for a general *hartal*, it was widely obeyed. Here was a cause that had no communal slant. Everybody was for it, Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs, all classes and all castes. For the first, and possibly the last, time in its history the Great Jamu Musjid Mosque in Delhi heard a Hindu address its Moslem audience.

The *hartal* is an ancient Indian practice that almost invariably ushers in disorder, as it was bound to do in this case. The police so far as was possible avoided making arrests: if it came to general rioting where could the prisoners be put? The jails would not hold them. They winked even at the open hawking of proscribed books, including one of Gandhi's, in the Bombay streets. Ahmedabad, the seat of Satyagraha Ashram, was put under martial law. In Delhi eight persons were killed.

Gandhi ordered a second *hartal* which was marked by increasing mob violence. He was a stormy petrel of disorder now, and when he set out for Delhi the police stopped him at the Punjab border—there was trouble enough in the province without him—and he returned to Bombay. The public notice he received he records with naïve pleasure. "On seeing me the people went mad with joy, and the sky was rent with shouts." And when later he visited Lahore, "The entire population had turned out of doors in eager expectation, as if to meet a dear relation after a long separation, and was delirious with joy."

Meanwhile the *Satyagrahists* had snatched at the incident of the border. They published the false news that he had been jailed, and Ahmedabad, his special stamping ground, went off

with a bang. Posters appeared on the walls reading "Kill all Europeans," and "holy men" went about in the crowds demanding "white men's blood." In two days of unleashed riot many persons were murdered. A British police sergeant was hacked to pieces and a magistrate was burned to death.

Uproar raged throughout the Punjab. Railway stations and bridges were attacked, government buildings, including the courthouse and post and telegraph offices were destroyed. The railway was torn up and telegraph lines were cut. In Amritsar, the Sikh capital, the mob murdered the two British directors of a bank and burned bank and bodies together. They threw the manager of another from its balcony, poured oil on his body and burned him alive. They set upon a lady missionary-doctor, a devoted friend of the people, beat her with clubs and left her for dead. She was found later by a good-Samaritan shopkeeper and hidden till she could be smuggled into the fort, where she lay for weeks between life and death. "Seize the white women" was written on the walls of buildings. At Lahore the vernacular newspapers declared the Sikh troops had deserted the army.

When the news of the rising at Amritsar reached the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the "Iron Man of the Punjab," at Lahore, which except for the fort lines, within which some hundreds of women and children had been gathered, was in the hands of the mob, he sent posthaste to General Reginald Dyer, who was three hours from Amritsar, directing him to go there and take charge. Dyer found the city rocking with riot. The second morning after his arrival he marched in with a column of Indian and Gurka troops and made proclamation to the jeering crowds with drummers, at nineteen points of the city, ordering them to disperse, with a warning that the order would be carried out if necessary by force of arms. A mock procession followed them, beating kerosene tins and shouting that his troops were powerless and the British Government at an end.

Shortly after noon word was brought him that in defiance of his order a mob had collected in an abandoned garden in the

city. He took fifty men, with rifles and machine guns, to the place. Apparently the people tried to disperse. He trained his guns on the jammed exits and gave the order to fire. Of above twelve hundred casualties, three hundred and seventy-nine persons were killed in cold blood.

This was stark massacre. For the Indians it put a blot on the escutcheon of the British military that has never been wiped away.

Dyer was a soldier of experience and reputation. He was no doubt a brave one—he had risked his life often enough in the northwest passes. There is no shadow of doubt that the situation he found in Amritsar seemed desperate, that he feared—as O'Dwyer and every Englishman there feared—that the rising, if not quickly and sternly quelled, might spread through all India in another Mutiny more terrible than the one in 1857. The later testimony of a brother officer affirmed that, when he gave the order to fire, Dyer thought the crowd in the garden was preparing to “rush” him, in which case he and his handful of troops would be smashed like flies and the city be given over to butchery and rapine. That the only thing to do was to strike terror to the rioters, and through them to the whole seething Punjab, by “hitting first and hitting hard.”

It is a nice point and a psychological one. If he was right his later statement, “If I had fired a little, I should have been wrong in firing at all,” was a cogent one. But whether right or wrong it was this sentence that damned him. The usual committee was appointed to sit upon the incident, he gave it his version, and while it conferred *sine die* he returned to his duty.

Meanwhile the Nationalists were screaming at the government's repressive measures and not mentioning the murderous campaign that had made them necessary. Even the most liberal of the Moderates, carried away by the violence of the outburst, joined in this. Of the Congress leaders only Mrs. Besant, its president two years before, had the balance and courage to stand against the tumult. “None, I presume,” she said, “will contend that the government should look on while mobs mur-

dered, wrecked banks, fired railroad stations . . . Will my critics say at what stage the government should intervene? Let us for this time of danger drop all criticism of government action and stand firmly against revolution, which means bloodshed at home and invasion from abroad."

It later became known that the Afghan Amir, Habibullah, early in the year had made alliance with the Emir of Bokhara and other Asian princes to oppose the Soviet advance. In February he was murdered in his sleep. Amanulla, his third son, who had seized the throne, was no friend to Great Britain. Thinking her helpless in the rebellion, he had declared war. Afghan forces were gathering on the Kabul Road (the word rhymes, strangely enough, with "bauble") the artery of the northwest passes, and a Red detachment was reported mobilizing on the Pamirs, poised for a descent on northern India.

The Amritsar explosion was the signal for a general British round-up of the agitators who were back of the gathering on which Dyer had fired. Its organizer, Muhammad Bashir, the notorious Extremist, was sentenced to death, but was subsequently pardoned to give the government more trouble later. One escaped. Five were given transportation for life. One turned informer to save his neck.

An examination of railway freight books showed that over two hundred thousand *lathis* (the *lathi*, in common use by the police, is an exaggerated baton, such as is used in England in the manly art of single-stick, the Indian variety being iron shod and a heavy and formidable weapon) had been imported into the Punjab in March and April, obviously for the arming of a rebel army. The Afghan postmaster in Peshawar was seized, with his papers and seditious correspondence. The conspiracy, with all its ramifications, was laid bare. The *Satyagrahists* were to decree *hartals* in April and May, and the Moslems were to proclaim a holy war at Bombay on April 23. The Afghans were to open the attack, and the Indian agitators were to act as soon as the fighting began. The reason for the destruction of railway centers and bridges and the cutting of telegraph lines was

now clear: it was an organized plan to wreck transportation in the Punjab, which was to be the heart of the rebellion. But the rising at Amritsar had been premature. The conspirators' impatience had betrayed them.

Gandhi had come to Delhi in March to organize his *Satyagraha* and had met the Moslem leader, Abdul Bari, at Lucknow. It has been alleged that they discussed a joint program of Civil Disobedience and holy war. The student of Gandhi will reject this. The instinct of dictatorship had been growing in him—and not only dictatorship in moral and spiritual things—but he had not gone as far as such an understanding would imply. Under his political operations has always lain an astonishing naïveté that verges on credulity, of which it has been easy for leaders whose motives he trusted to take advantage. And yet there are some elements which make his equation irreducible. For example his cryptic statement published in 1921 in *Young India*: "The Congress began to tamper with the loyalty of the Indian Army in September last year, the Central Khilafat Committee began it earlier, and *I began it earlier still.*" That reference might be better for a bit of explaining.

The crushing of the rising and the resulting exposé chilled the Russian ardor for invasion. The Afghans were left to run it alone. Dyer took his forces through the passes and defeated them, ending the third Afghan war in August. The danger was past.

He handed his report of the Amritsar affair to the Indian Government in late August, after the Afghan war was over, completing it with great difficulty, for he was very ill. Soon afterwards the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, with the approval of the Army Council, censured and retired him.

If the Congress Report, written by Gandhi, who had been no eyewitness, and is by nature prone to believe what his own people tell him, is to be credited, the crowd Dyer had fired upon was an innocent gathering of countryfolk, come together to discuss the situation peacefully. Their program had even included a resolution denouncing violence of any kind. In short,

they were ardent *Satyagrahists*, there to keep down riot, not to incite it. But according to better testimony there were at least five thousand persons in the place, many of them armed with *lathis*. The speakers were well-known agitators of the Tilak persuasion. When Dyer's force arrived a member of the mob who had committed the atrocities of the past few days was haranguing the meeting to further murderous excesses.

If one is to believe the *Satyagrahist* accounts the massacre was followed by a veritable reign of terror. Dreadful tales were told—of nurses forbidden to attend the wounded or bring them water while they lay for twenty-four hours in the burning sun; of gallows set up on street corners to terrorize the people; of children flogged, women forcibly unveiled, suspects shut in cages. Such apologists as the British journalist Horniman and the American Methodist Bishop Fisher broadcast these tales of horror circulated by the Nationalists.

The authorities in the city had been under a long strain and the police were on edge. In such a situation men sometimes lose their heads. Perhaps some did that fatal day, beside Dyer. Yet the calculated atrocities alleged are put out of court by mere knowledge of British character. The Indian Government, however, had not the foresight to offset the barrage by publicizing the truth as it emerged. That had to wait for the slow-moving committee, sunk in its pachydermous deliberation. The blaze of Indian propaganda was let alone to burn itself out.

It had a profound and disturbing effect on opinion on this side of the Atlantic. Not one in a thousand Americans, it is safe to say, to whom the word "Amritsar" stands for British arrogance and contempt for the Indian breed, has ever heard the other side of the story. Believe it or not, I have even known Englishmen who have not, and they were not Gandhi admirers either.

One disputed my statement that on the same evening when, by the Nationalists' account, the city was a bloody welter of terror and torture, a delegation of Amritsar's merchants petitioned Dyer to permit shops to be reopened. That this was

granted, the curfew relaxed and normalcy restored, and that by ten o'clock that night the city was absolutely quiet. That delegations of citizens came to him next morning to thank him for his action. I had to dig up a reprint of the official report before my English skeptic would believe it.

From the maze of contradictions the blunt fact emerged that, when the ghastly mess at the abandoned garden had been cleared away, Amritsar had no more disorder.

The rioting in Bombay and Calcutta, however, for some time continued to be so ominous that the British made arrangements to evacuate their women and children or put them behind fortifications. There seems no doubt that both the committee and the Indian Government (then at Simla for the hot season) were in a state of blue funk. It would be natural to assume that only an official condemnation would save the situation—not a favorable atmosphere for Dyer. But whether justice or political expediency had its way, the committee, with characteristic blindness to Indian psychology, stalled for time while Indian resentment hardened. Its report was not officially handed to the Viceroy till a year, lacking a single month, had gone by!

The Amritsar tragedy crashed on Gandhi's campaign like a falling tower. The spate of murder and arson that had cost the lives of scores of innocent persons and the wholesale destruction of property shook him to his soul. He bitterly denounced both Dyer and O'Dwyer. He had started for Delhi, he said, to calm the disorder. In barring him from the Punjab the Lieutenant Governor had invited the very tragedy that his minion Dyer precipitated. Was it that his Inner Voice was speaking to him now, saying what the Politician must silence by a louder counter-accusation?

For O'Dwyer the denunciation had consequences that were to reach across time and distance. It pulled the trigger of the revolver with which a Sikh student, who had never seen him, shot him down twenty years later in London's Caxton Hall. Then, with startling suddenness, the Politician vanished and the Saint was peering out at his work, appalled.

The psychiatrist, probing into the secrets of human character, has given us the word "psychotic," to tag an individual in whom curious mixtures of contradictory traits show themselves. One compartment of the psychotic's mind, they tell us, may regard with perfect clearness the world of phenomena about him, while another compartment, quite separate and shut off from the first, is a general clearinghouse for phantasy, littered like an old garret with odds and ends of torn philosophies, fanatical visions and voices, and mystic dreams. The schizophrenia victim exists mentally in a kind of borderland in which his activities alternate between the two compartments.

The word might have been coined for Gandhi. It connotes his grasp on living realities, his power to see deeply into practical problems and to express them lucidly, the selflessness and purity of his life and work, and at the same time explains the strange contradictions and illogic of his conclusions—his intervals of apparent blindness to what all others see, which have puzzled and distressed his staunchest followers; his reversals of judgment; his oscillations between a broad deistic faith and the repulsive salvage of medieval Hinduism, between the surge of jubilant self-confidence, and the sag of contrition and penitential fasts.

If this analysis is to hold, Gandhi is no *poseur*. The selfless Saint is as real as his shifty partner, the Politician. It is the interplay and conflict of the pair that puzzles one. The masses in India and many of his biographers in other lands see only the Saint. To Romain Rolland he is "the man who became one with the Universal Being," to Rene Fülöp-Miller "the holy man," to the Reverend C. F. Andrews "a saint and a redeemer," and to the Reverend J. H. Holmes "Christ returned to earth." While to Churchill in Downing Street, frowning over the latest cables from New Delhi, he is the "seditious, half-naked fakir," and to the London *Daily Mail* a "saintly humbug."

Gandhi, once again the Saint of the *ashram*, spoke in grief and contrition. "As these things have happened in my name, I am ashamed of them, and those responsible for them have



thereby not honored me but disgraced me. . . . *Satyagraha* admits of no violence, no pillage, no incendiarism; and still in the name of *Satyagraha* we burned down buildings, forcibly captured weapons, extorted money, stopped trains, cut off telegraph wires, killed innocent people, plundered shops and private houses. If deeds such as these could save me from the prison house or the scaffold, I should not like to be so saved."

"Profoundly shocked," he issued an agonized *mea culpa*. He had judged the moral standard of the people too high, and (as he wrote to the *Times of India*) had "underrated the forces of evil." He had made "a Himalayan miscalculation." He called off his program and as self-punishment—in a quaint contrast to a blame he counted so mountainous—sentenced himself to a fast of three days.

## Chapter Thirteen

### "BY THAT SIN FELL THE ANGELS"

MONTAGU'S statement to the Commons did not bear the fruit the Nationalists had hoped for. The promised legislation, known as the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, embodied in the new Government of India Act, created the Central Legislative Assembly and legislative councils for the provinces, a long step forward toward self-government. The governorships of provinces, membership in the Viceroy's and other councils, were thrown open to Indians. It set India directly in the path of representative government. In fact, it made home-rule seem inevitable within a reasonable time. Also India had signed the peace treaty and was an original member of the League of Nations. It could act independently at Geneva, whatever the view of the British delegations; another step toward the responsibilities of the new status.

The Act, however, was foredoomed by the Extremists, and knowing that they would have their way, when a special Congress was called to consider it, the Moderates, in a final flare of rebellion, refused to attend lest they seem to give countenance to them, and held a gloomy session of their own.

The projected reforms, nevertheless, pleased Gandhi. With the close of his three-day fast he had announced a new program of popular education by means of leaflets to teach the people the true meaning of *Satyagraha* and, supplementing his *Young India*, had started another periodical for political propaganda. In their columns he declared anew his faith in "ultimate British justice." He still held that "while Dyer's inhumanity showed British character at its worst, the King's proclamation of the new act showed it at its best." But it fell short of the Nationalists' extravagant expectations. Tilak found it "entirely unacceptable."

When the smoldering Congress met at the close of the year at Amritsar, Motilal Nehru, its president, called on it in the

name of the people to refuse all overtures of the government. He demanded that it condemn the reform plan without reservations and boycott the new Legislatures. He was a matchless debater and a master of sarcasm, and he lashed the Extremists into a new fury. They voted as he demanded, and Gandhi had to fight hard, with the help of Malaviya and the stand-bys, to put through his resolution for "attainment of self-government *within the empire* by the people of India, by all legal constitutional and non-violent means."

The Moderates, Nehru's own party, to his chagrin, were lackluster. They were for the reforms, and in anger he went over unreservedly, to his son Jawaharlal's delight, to the Gandhites. All in a night he reconstructed his whole framework of life, which is to me one of Gandhi's most unexplainable miracles. For the older man was a born conservative, with no loose cog in his thinking. He had not the fire of Jawaharlal nor his youthful illusions. Yet he turned right about face, to the consternation of his friends.

There were no halfway measures about his apostasy. He gave up his lucrative practice at the bar and closed his law office. Some years later he was to deed over his palatial home, the famous Anand Bhawan [Happiness House] to the Congress for its headquarters. He discarded his European clothes, as Gandhi had done at Satyagraha Ashram, and adopted *in toto* his life of asceticism. From that day, till the excesses of the non-violent campaigns turned his gorge, which was not to be till some years later, he was as uncompromising in his attitude as Gandhi himself.

When the Congress adjourned the two Nehrus, father and son, took council with Gandhi and founded a new Nationalist paper, *The Independent*, in their home town of Allahabad.

The Indian Government's settlement of the Dyer case reached London in the spring. The committee had delivered the goods. His Majesty's government upheld Dyer's censure and dismissal, repudiating emphatically his doctrine of moral effect and agreeing with the Indian Government's finding that he had acted

"beyond necessity and reason and without proper humanity." Nothing could have been stronger—had not Montagu, trying vaguely to carry a little water on both shoulders, added that His Majesty's Government "thought it possible the danger had been greater than appeared from the committee's report."

The House of Lords, however, in debate, did what it could to minimize the official censure by flatly approving Dyer's action through the mouths of two judges of national reputation. Lord Findley called the procedure of the committee "most unseemly," and Lord Sumner said bluntly that the India Office's approval of the Indian Government's verdict had been "gross cowardice." The Tories held that Dyer had saved India.

Private admirers got up a purse of a hundred thousand dollars for him and presented him with a sword of honor. The official condemnation thus, so far as the Indians were concerned, left Dyer, like Kipling's Tomlinson, in the air, "too black for heaven, and yet too white for hell."

This was not what the Nationalists wanted. The revolution had faded out and they were sore. The repressed fury that had been seething in their ranks since Amritsar and which fed upon the necessary regime of martial law in the Punjab, came to the surface again. The announcement from London that the Prince of Wales would visit India—a gesture for "appeasement" (malodorous word!) that at this distance seems clumsy and ill timed—only made matters worse. Public unrest was increased by the strikes of mill workers everywhere, for the boom that had begun with the close of the war had now petered out.

And as unrest, political, social, economic, grew over India one sees the Mahatma of the *ashram* slowly dimming again, and the Politician coming to peer through the pebble glasses. The Congress Extremists were ready to seize on anything that promised a row, but no oil of good counsel was poured on the troubled waters. The Saint's cruse was empty.

It was not long before Gandhi was varying his preachments on the duty of non-violence by demands on the government for the dismissal of O'Dwyer, the Punjab Lieutenant Governor.

He even backed a demand for the recall of the Viceroy. He termed the official instruction of the Secretary of State for India as to the Punjab disturbances "whitewash." This was poking the bear, and the bear responded in the usual way. The leftists called on Gandhi in no uncertain tones to act. Everything was ripe for another mass movement. For him to do nothing was to lose his hold.

One would suppose he must have hesitated—who would not, with the new grass hardly covering the bloody ground of Amritsar? Had the idea become an obsession with him that the people had learned their lesson? In a recent issue of *Young India* he had written of "the wonderfully quick acceptance by the people of the principle of *Satyagraha*—the hold it has gained on them in curbing the forces of disorder and violence." Could he really have come to believe in his heart that so soon, with the dreadful reign of lawlessness in the Punjab not yet well over, his few speeches and a few months' editorial exhortation in newspapers that the illiterate masses could not read, had by some mysterious alchemy transmuted the natures of the mob? If so it was an example of wishful thinking that is more than extraordinary. Or was it the Politician shouting down the Saint?

To be forehanded he wrote to the Viceroy "venturing to suggest" Non-Co-operation, which "would enable those who wish to do so to disassociate themselves from the government," and which, if unattended by violence, "must compel the government to undo its wrongs." He added that Non-Co-operation was the only dignified and constitutional form of such direct action, it being "a right recognized from times immemorial of the subjects to refuse to assist the ruler who misrules."

This appears to be the beginning of that singular lopsided personal correspondence that Gandhi has carried on, at intervals, from *ashram* or jail, with the representatives in India of the King-Emperor, from Lord Chelmsford down. With the Punjab disorders he had become the representative of the mob, the Satrap of Uproar. The Viceroy is the embodiment of order and authority, the figure which symbolizes all to which Gandhi

has opposed every quality of plan and cunning he possesses. The Mahatma would not have been human if the replies, on the embossed viceregal note paper, eloquent of the pomp and power of an almost imperial office, had not tickled the vanity which is so inherent a part of his character. His followers have read the correspondence spread in the columns of his publications with mounting pride. It has greatly enhanced his reputation. But authority unclothed with the aloofness that is its proper garment is at a discount always, even in our era of militant democracy, and it is hard to see where the Indian Government has been the gainer by the exchange.

In *Satyagraha* parlance Non-Co-operation was a long step beyond the Passive Resistance Gandhi's *hartals* had enforced hitherto. That had been only the Entered Apprentice Degree. Non-Co-operation was the Fellowcraft. It meant an absolute break-off of all association and dealing with the government. No holding of titles or offices, local or imperial. No attendance of government schools by children, or colleges by youths. No recourse to British courts. No recruiting for army or civil service. No voting for candidates or standing for office. It was to be the attack *à outrance*.

What has become of the asseverations of love for England and the protestations of loyalty? In the light of this sudden transformation old fragments of Gandhi's story acquire significance: the childish umbrage at the missionaries; the wish of the lad, "blinded by the frenzy of reform" that the Indians would eat meat so that they would be strong enough to drive out the British; the law student's dislike of England, which he "could not bear;" the young Rajkot barrister's hurt and anger at the British political agent who, over-importuned, had had him put out of his office when he refused to leave it. Telltale incidents, these, to the psychoanalyst, signposts pointing to a sentiment consciously repressed and denied but subconsciously persistent, a part of the litter of the garret that held the psychotic's phantasies and mystic dreams—and the saint's adroit twin, the Politician, who had now emerged, the hidden mainspring of Gandhi's campaigns to "bring the British government to its knees."

As an afterthought Gandhi wrapped his South African war medals, including the gold Kaisar-i-Hind, in tissue paper and mailed the packet addressed, "To the British Government, London, England."

A few days later the fiery Tilak died. There was no one left who could have disputed with Gandhi the leadership of the Congress Extremists.

Thus far in the spiritual dualism it had been the Saint functioning, with an occasional off-the-record appearance, as in the Punjab disorders, of the Politician. From this time the balance is reversed. It is the Politician cleverly playing his cards with the Saint now and then looking over his shoulder. There is a curious side to this partnership that is a frequent mark of schizophrenia. The Saint knows nothing of the Politician. When he awakes, abashed at the consequences of his actions, he grieves for them as his own errors. But the Politician is always aware of the Saint. He explains the interplay by the theory that holiness and politics go naturally together. "Politics bereft of religion is a death trap and kills the soul. Divorced from religion, it is a corpse, fit only to be buried." And he draws the singular inference that "Jesus was a prince among politicians!"

Gandhi could not have doubted now that he could win the Congress machine to his leadership. But he needed more than that if he was to move the people *en masse*. The Congress was predominantly Hindu: with a few notable exceptions the Moslems stood outside. They were a great and powerful segment, and he needed them.

He had already made a bid for their favor in showing open sympathy for the Ali brothers at the time of their short internment during the war. During the later Punjab disorders, when Afghanistan, thinking to take Great Britain at a disadvantage, had declared war on her, the Alis had called on the Indian Moslems of the northwest to support their Afghan coreligionists and make it a holy war to inflame all India. They were in prison again now, but the Khilafat cause, with the close of the World War, had assumed greater proportions.

The Indian Moslems who had fought beside the British in

Mesopotamia and Egypt had no joy in the defeat of their brethren, to whom they were bound by ties of like religion and civilization far stronger than any political ones. Following the Armistice the Moslems living in England, led by the Aga Khan, India's Moslem leader, had memorialized the British Government in Turkey's behalf. The older of the Alis had headed a Khilafat delegation to England only a few months before. The peace terms, so disastrous to Turkey, had now made the Khilafat cause a burning issue in India. The brothers, who had been active in the Moslem League, had preached Moslem unity, the identity of Indian Moslems with those of the other Moslem countries; and setting Moslem law above the law of the nations, had argued that the mandates—Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Palestine—were contrary to the religious tenets of Islam. The Khilafat cause had become an infuriate demand that the Sultan's former dominions be returned to him.

Here was a hand-picked issue for Gandhi. As a good Hindu he should have no religious reason to make cause with the Turks. But this was politics, not religion. A conference of leaders of the Khilafat movement was on at Allahabad. He met them there and laid his cards on the table: he, his *Satyagraha* organization, and the publications in his control, to back the Moslem Khilafat claim; they to subscribe to the *Satyagraha* and join the Non-Co-operation movement he proposed to start.

The proposal must have startled the Moslem leaders, even Jinnah, who was active in the movement. For is there anything under the sun more anti-*Ahimsa*, less non-violent, than Islam? Later the president of the League, in a speech at the Khilafat Conference at Ahmedabad, declared that the Moslems had agreed to accept the non-violence part of the agreement, "though Islam is opposed to it," on Gandhi's assurance that self-rule would be attained within a year. Self-rule to the Moslems meant an India without the British, and with the British out they have never had the slightest doubt who would do the ruling. There are ninety-odd millions of them and they are a fighting folk. The Hindus are not. At any rate the proposal



smacked of real warfare. In their anger at the Turkish treaty they were ready for it. They had nothing to lose. The bargain was struck.

The alliance *prima facie* was political expediency at its rawest and Gandhi at his worst. For the time being it united the two factions in an anti-British agitation with him as leader, but in the outcome it was to alienate the Moslems still further from the empire and inestimably widen the breach between Moslem and Hindu which was perilously wide already.

He began his campaign with an *Open Letter to All Englishmen in India*, in which he paraded the strange new hippogriff with Moslem beak and Hindu claws. The letter had little to commend it. And it lacked a certain surety that has marked most of his public pronouncements, a subtle air of dedication to something fine and selfless. It must have made painful reading for those of his admirers who had followed him thus far with growing misgivings.

When he approved the new reforms, only a few short months before, he had praised the Act as "an earnest of the intention of the British people to do justice to India, which ought to remove suspicion on that score." He had declared that "our duty is not to subject them to carping criticism, but to settle down quietly to work to make them a success." This had been *after* the Rowlatt Bills, *after* the Punjab disorders that had culminated in Amritsar, *after* the chief actor in that tragedy had been broken, *after* Gandhi's approval of the new India Act, with its legislative assembly soon to be inaugurated. For ammunition now on this new front he had to fall back on Sir Michael O'Dwyer, who, he said, "proved himself directly responsible for most of the official crimes and callous to the sufferings of the people," and on the debate in the House of Lords that had followed Dyer's summary dismissal. For his make-weight, the Khilafat cause, he had little more than a statement Lloyd George was said to have made two years before—which the Moslems had since made wide use of—that the Allies "were not fighting to deprive Turkey of lands that were Turkish in race." The double-barreled

accusation seems a slender basis for a campaign of open sedition.

In the *Open Letter* Lloyd George's remark became the government's "promise" and the failure to restore the Turkish dominions his "treachery." This, and the condonation of the Amritsar "atrocities," had "completely shattered his faith in the good intentions of the British government and nation." The English had "shown total disregard of Indian feelings by glorifying the Punjab administration and flouting Mussulman sentiment." He had sincerely believed, he said, that the British administrators were "honest, though insular and dense." The whole situation was now changed for him. His eyes were opened. Experience had made him wiser. He considered that the existing system of government was wholly bad and required special national effort to end or mend it. He could take no pride in calling the empire his or describing himself as its citizen. On the contrary he fully realized that he was a pariah of the empire. "I must therefore," he concluded, "constantly pray for its radical reconstruction or total destruction."

He began his appeal to the people without delay. While his Congress Committee organized propaganda in the cities and larger towns, he officially opened his Gujarat National University of Ahmedabad, adjoining his Satyagraha Ashram, with himself as chancellor. This, he announced, was not to be on the American pattern. It was to be rather a bridge across the chasm that separated the uneducated from the educated, a place where Indian youth, Hindu and Moslem alike, could learn to spin and weave while studying all that was best in the ancient religions.

He toured the country with the Ali brothers for the Khilafat cause, carrying the torch even into the far southeast, to the fanatical Moslem country of the Moplahs, spawn of the Arab pirates of the Middle Ages, where he formed Congress Committees. All the claims on behalf of the Khalif (though the Moslem leaders themselves were not agreed on them, and it was not certain that even a majority supported them) he made his own. The Arabs must be given independence. Turkey must

have not only her old dominions, but Anatolia and Thrace. The Armenians must have home-rule under Turkish sovereignty. Indian troops must be withdrawn from Egypt! (This though Egypt had repudiated the Khalif's authority.) The Moslems should withdraw all support from the government, and the Hindus should uphold them. India was under a "satanic" rule, whose very foundations were evil. All co-operation with it, or with any of its functions must cease, "so that every link in the chain which binds society together shall be broken." He broadcast his doctrines of the spinning wheel, the picketing of liquor shops, the burning of imported cloth.

It was an inflammatory and provocative campaign, which by destroying all respect for authority invited the very violence against which it preached. Wherever he passed he left turmoil behind him. The propaganda was punctuated by riots and burning public buildings. *Hartals* and disorderly processions dislocated trade and threw the bazaars into confusion. Children left government schools and students deserted colleges.

"The British government," writes Jawaharlal Nehru, "has an idea that much of the trouble in India is due to agitators. It is a singularly inept notion." To him Gandhi is a great leader who "has won the adoration of its millions and has seemed to impose his will," while they "seemed to follow blindly his behests." He sees them in fact pushed on by a "great historical urge." One who has heard the glib Congress spellbinders, chief of whom has been the younger Nehru himself, will be hard put to find another name for them.

It is incredible that Gandhi was unaware of the havoc his propaganda was causing, or of its possibilities for harm. One has only to recall his saying that he would "seek the shelter of the Himalayas should violence become universal and should it not have engulfed me." But his work went forward without pause, though protests were coming from the wisest heads of India. Tagore had taken alarm when Gandhi inaugurated his university, so alien in its principles to his own Santiniketan. He had been aghast at the idea of sending India's youths back to the

spinning wheel and the millet field, when other countries were sending them abroad to study the intellectual achievements of other nations. To him the Mahatma's attack on what he himself considered sound national education had seemed outrageous, and he now impeached the revolutionary program. Sastri, a member of the imperial Legislative Council though still in his early thirties, attacked it violently as wholly out of touch with reality, and a brilliant group of Bengal leaders of public opinion, descendants of the school of Gokhale, fought it determinedly.

But Gandhi was not deterred. To those who challenged his Moslem alliance he replied, "My association with the noblest Mussulmans has taught me to see that Islam has spread not by the power of the sword, but by the prayerful love of an unbroken line of its saints and *faqirs*." A reply staggering to anyone who has studied the Islamic history of fire and scimitar.

Motilal Nehru, inspired by his son Jawaharlal, took Gandhi over the last hurdle. He was with the hottest of the Extremists now, Nationalist to the bone, and Jawaharlal made him see in the Moslem entente a bright opportunity. Up to this time the Mahatma had openly supported British rule, applying his *Satyagraha* (in its stage of Passive Resistance) only to freeing the people from what he conceived to be injustice, as he had applied it in South Africa. Why not, the Pandit urged, make self-rule, whose denial was surely Britain's cruelest wrong to India, one of the objects—indeed, the one greatest objective—of his campaign?

After meditation Gandhi assented. Perhaps he did not need much persuasion. He may even have intended it anyway, for he has always had an uncanny way of guessing what people around him are thinking, and he could not have been ignorant of how opinion had been hardening. He must have realized that he could not much longer stay clear of the Nationalist current that was setting so strongly toward "Full *Swaraj*," which had now come to mean no less than complete freedom from Great Britain. If the ax must eventually fall on the last cable that held India to the empire, why not now? A Free India—free from the

British entirely! Who was so able to bring that about as he? Let the saint-haze veil him as it will, beneath it is the Politician, and the politician's deepest instinct is the will to power.

The Congress, which met in special session at Calcutta in the autumn, had some new blood. One of its new acquisitions was the great Bengali, Chitta Ranjan Das, who was soon to be a power in the Congress and later Gandhi's bitter opponent if not his enemy. Educated in England and called to the bar in the Middle Temple, Das had become one of Calcutta's leading barristers. He was Motilal Nehru's kind, but not an orthodox Hindu. He affected the old school oratory and the flowing robes of an ancient Roman. He had sprung into sudden prominence with a powerful speech in Calcutta's Town Hall against the Defense of India Act, and in 1919 had thrown up his profession for politics. Gandhi's agitation against the Rowlatt Act won Das to his side, and in this Congress showdown he was a fierce champion.

It was a foregone conclusion that the resolution for Non-Cooperation would carry. It did, with what amounted to acclamation. The Congress made deeper the damnation of Gandhi's *Open Letter*. The government and the viceregal pronouncements, it declared, both alike showed "support of frightfulness" and "absence of repentance both for the Punjab atrocities and the Khilafat injustice." It was the duty of every non-Moslem Indian to assist his Moslem brother. Malaviya of the *Mahasabha* and Jinnah of the Moslem League fought hard for "self-rule within the empire." But Gandhi was prepared to go a bit further now. His resolution read, "within the British empire if possible, *without if necessary*." He promised the cheering assemblage that self-rule would be attained within a year.

The regular session at Nagpur at the year's close followed his lead. In affirming the resolution it struck from the creed all reference to empire connection and "constitutional methods of agitation," a significant cancellation. It howled down Jinnah and even Malaviya when they tried to point out the implications of the program. Gandhi did not forget the Untouchables: on his

motion it put in a plank for the "Removal of Untouchability." Presumably this was to be along the lines of his own plan, which was not to better the out-castes' condition, but to make them a separate caste and that, of course, the lowest. He asked for, and got, a war chest of three quarters of a million pounds.

The agile Rajagopalachari made the final move for him by demanding that the campaign of Non-Co-operation be applied also to self-rule of India by Indians alone. The resolution was passed. The decks were now clear for the fight. Gandhi had captured the Congress. This was too much for Jinnah, and he abandoned it.

Thus passed the old Congress. The last shred of meaning bestowed on it by Hume, its founder, the parliamentary character given it by Gokhale and his brilliant coterie, the progress gained along peaceful ways toward real unity and representative government, of which dominion status and increasing freedom and responsibility were the goals, had gone into the discard. With the Nagpur session it ceased to be a "native parliament" and became a mass meeting, overwhelmingly Hindu, of the left-wingers. Since then it has been a caucus—and not a national but a partisan one—at the beck and call of the little Mahatma, a gathering after the pattern of a political convention with a Mat Quay or a Jim Farley banging the gavel.

Except that Gandhi is no gavel-banger. He holds no office. He is that gray shadow flitting in the background. But the shadow's word is law.

## *Chapter Fourteen*

### THE DIMINISHING HALO

WHILE the old Congress was breathing its last the Duke of Connaught arrived in India to represent the King-Emperor in the opening of the new Central Legislature. It was a quaint jigsaw puzzle. But India is one too. It had seats for all minorities, Moslems, Sikhs, landowners, commercial magnates, Christians, Anglo-Indians, Untouchables, Englishmen. But heterogeneous as it was, it was a practical attempt to solve the many-faceted problem. The Congress had boycotted it, thanks to Motilal Nehru.

To the neutral observer here is a measure of the unwisdom which has actuated the Congress ever since, and which has refused stubbornly to take account of stock. Here was the Assembly opened and operating, the first great surge toward the true representative government the Congress had been demanding. Could one ask for a more living proof that constitutional methods had not failed? The province of Bihar had an Indian governor. The new provincial executive councils had nineteen Indian ministers and ten Indian members. There were overwhelming elected majorities in the Central and Provincial Legislatures. Indian soldiers were holding King's Commissions. A military college had been founded to prepare Indian youths for admission to Sandhurst and another for the education of the sons of Indian officers.

But all these things meant nothing to the Nationalists. The check to the reform constitution had been Gandhi's move for Non-Co-operation, based upon issues which were quite irrelevant, and framed after he himself had welcomed it as "an earnest of the intention of the British people to do justice to India." In his inaugural speech the Duke said, "The shadow of Amritsar has lengthened over the fair face of India." He might as truly have added, "That shadow has become Gandhi."

Gandhi lost no time in organizing his committees and start-

ing the student intelligentsia propaganda. The "Gandhi cap," of white *khaddar* cloth, shaped like our overseas headgear, blossomed out as the Nationalist badge. The Congress adopted it and it was soon to be seen everywhere. Even the women and girls sported them.

The campaign brought some new figures into prominence. One was Subhash Bose, later to be the leader of Bombay's radicals. He was a younger Tilak, more poisonously anti-British, if possible, and according to the Indian Government one of the worst of the terrorists, although when a Calcutta newspaper called him one he sued for damages and got them. A friend and admirer of De Valera, he was to gain fame in 1930 through his election as mayor of Calcutta while in prison.

He was a perfect tool for the Extremists. He was then in his early twenties, but old enough to have been dismissed from the Presidency College in Calcutta, to have taken a course at Cambridge, and to have passed the civil service examination in London, and was rapidly rising to leadership among the leftists of the Congress when the Non-Co-operation campaign was launched.

As disorder spread Gandhi bolstered the people's excitement with his confidence. It had been September when he promised self-rule within a year. In December he spoke of "our remaining nine months." In January his faith "never burned as brightly." The week following he exhorted a mass meeting of Calcutta merchants to "come out with your money if you wish to bring about this self-rule." In February he assured the people that "the country has never been so ready for establishing self-rule as now." But spring grew to summer and with self-rule as far off as ever, public restiveness became impatience. Gandhi ordered a general burning of all foreign cloth, beginning with Bombay. He hoped the process would "spread from one end of India to the other . . . till every article of foreign clothing has been reduced to ashes."

The riot of bonfires began. He had organized a body with a student nucleus, which he called National Volunteers, to carry



out the decrees of his Working Committee. This, intended to be a youth brigade, had quickly absorbed a lawless alley-element, hooligans and worse, who were disorderly and dangerous.

Every city of any size in India is full of students. You can generally tell one (though as with Arnold Bennett's Harvard man, you can't tell him much) by his Western trousers with the shirttail outside—a sensible adaptation for hot weather—or the paper pamphlets thrust through his girdle. Most of them seem to live literally from hand to mouth. Cross any square after dark and you will find the grass dotted with their recumbent figures, wrapped in dirty sheets or frowsy blankets, asleep. On the pavements that skirt it you must look sharp or you will step on one.

I never see a student crowd in India without a pang of deep pity. They are so eager and sure of themselves when they come, from Naini Tal, or Brindaban, or maybe from some little mud-walled village where a family has starved itself for ten years to start the bright son off toward success and riches. And the chances are so slim!

The A.B. is the first desideratum: with that he can tackle the civil service examinations. At the bookstalls one can buy for a rupee or two a book giving the question papers for the past ten years with all the answers, "Prepared by B. N. Mukerjee, Esquire, B. A., Graduate University of Allahabad." The successful one, barring crime or habitual drunkenness, is practically fixed for life in some one of the thousand crannies of the railroad, postal or police services of the Indian Government, with three square meals a day and a brass-buttoned uniform. A stodgy and treadmill career, to be sure, though better than a hand-to-mouth existence in some rice-field village that will never have even a native cinema. (Even if one fails it is some distinction to have tried. I have known a visiting card to bear the line "Admitted to C. S. Examination, 1938.")

But every unsuccessful aspirant becomes a Nationalist with a grievance like the Indian cow's hump, and like the cow he pulls with it. A few frayed and tawdry years of hanging about city corners and he is an Extremist of the deepest dye, which

means an implacable hater of the British, with a perfect confidence that, England's heavy hand once removed, he and his like could run the big machine much better, replace all poverty with affluence in no time, and restore India to her ancient glory.

For that is what the Congress mirage-makers are always reminding him of, forgetting to speak of the squalor and misery that oppressed the masses of that gilded era.

This is the type that gives the Indian Government the most trouble. He is in every Nationalist procession and demonstration, and getting arrested lends him a pleasing sense of importance.

During my service in South America I learned what a problem the half-baked student mass may be when properly wrought upon by the political-minded intelligentsia. I saw a crowd of them ridden down by the Rio de Janeiro mounted police, and while Minister in Asunción in 1932 I saw a machine gun on the roof of President Guggiari's palace riddle a youthful crowd in the park below, with nearly a score of fatalities. I did not enjoy the sight.

Enrolled by the students, Gandhi's National Volunteers in Bombay soon numbered many thousands, the hacks, the tramps, the bored and bitter flotsam of the colleges. They mobbed the shops and bazaars, looted their imported stuffs and fired them in the streets. It is estimated that in Bombay alone one hundred and fifty thousand bolts of cloth were thus destroyed.

He personally took the lead in the holocaust. As in Savonarola's Florence, splendid weaves, priceless heirlooms some of them, were piled in heaps and burned by the yelling crowds. "In burning my foreign clothes," he declared, "I burn my shame. It is a sin for me to wear Regent Street finery when I know that if I had but worn cloth made by our own spinners and weavers it would have clothed me and at the same time fed and clothed them. . . . India is a house afire because its manhood is being daily scorched. It is dying of hunger because it has no work to buy food with." Through July the madness spread to other cities, but still the Indian Government did nothing.

Tagore had seen Gandhi's capture of the Congress with foreboding. In a famous interview he had reminded thoughtful Indians that the country's problems were too many and too great to be in the hands of one master. When he inveighed against the barbarity of the cloth-burning Gandhi's retort had been, "Let him burn his foreign clothes and spin like the rest!"

The bonfires did not add to Gandhi's stature with the thinking classes. Like the burning of Brazilian coffee and Florida oranges some years ago, the thing brought almost universal condemnation. His argument, when he found himself on the defensive, that the costly fabrics destroyed would have been wasted on the poor, who needed less finery than food, convinced nobody. He has been too wise to repeat the strategem.

While this went on at Bombay the Khilafatists met at Karachi, and the Alis, their guiding spirits, called on all Moslems, in the name of their religion, to desert the army. If their claims were not satisfied, they threatened an Indian republic would be proclaimed at the next Congress. The riots began to take a more serious turn, and in August the Moplahs of the Malabar coast, where Gandhi and the Alis had held forth, burst into open revolt.

The preaching of Gandhi and the propaganda of his Volunteers had led them to believe that the government was to be overthrown, which meant to them Moslem rule and freedom to do what they pleased to the Hindus. Thinking the moment had arrived, they attacked the white government officials, murdered the few Europeans they could get at, and then turned their fanatical fury on the Hindus, beginning with the landlords and moneylenders.

The bloody massacre was hell broke loose. It was the worst outburst of brutal and unrestrained barbarism India had yet seen, nor has there been any more appalling since. It out-Amritsared Amritsar by a thousand per cent. No one knows how many thousands of Hindus were butchered. Unnamable atrocities were wreaked on women and children. Hundreds of Hindus, male and female, were circumcized and made Moslems.

It is estimated that above a thousand Moslems were killed before the British troops crushed the rising. It was months before a semblance of order was restored. Then and only then were the Alis arrested and sentenced to two years imprisonment.

There was no question as to the inspiration of the affair. The Viceroy, in his speech at the opening of the second session of the Central Legislature, said, "It is obvious from the reports received that the ground had been carefully prepared for the purpose of creating an atmosphere favorable to violence, and no effort had been spared to rouse the passions and fury of the Moplahs." One of their leaders on trial pleaded that he had been led to believe the British Government had abdicated.

Gandhi interceded for them. He called them "the brave God-fearing Moplahs, fighting for what they considered religion, in a manner they consider religious." Mrs. Besant (the story of the affair as she has written it will not bear reading) made a terse comment: "It would be well if Mr. Gandhi could be taken to Malabar, to see with his own eyes the ghastly horrors which have been created by his preaching and that of his loved Brothers Ali!"

But Gandhi did not go to Malabar, as Mrs. Besant did, or to Calicut on the opposite coast, whither the thousands of distraught refugees, fleeing from dreadful death, were streaming for protection. One may doubt if he even read the lurid tales that came from them. The Politician was seated firmly in the saddle, riding hell for leather for the brush, and was in no mood to yield the rein to the meek-eyed Saint. Gandhi brushed the matter aside as a mere incident in his campaign, whose onus was to be laid not on his Non-Co-operation tactics, but on the machinations of the "satanic" British government, which he darkly hinted was not above playing the part of provocateur.

The Viceroy, Lord Reading, even under such provocation, showed an amazing tolerance. In a speech before the Legislative Council he said, "The leader of the movement to paralyze authority, persistently and as I believe in all earnestness and sincerity, preaches the doctrine of non-violence, and has even

reproved his followers for resorting to it. Yet again and again it has been shown that his doctrine is completely forgotten and his exhortations absolutely disregarded. . . . To all men of sanity and common sense in all classes of society, it must be clear that the defiance of the government and constituted authority can only result in widespread disorder, in political chaos, in anarchy and in ruin."

What was the Indian Government waiting for, that Gandhi remained as free as the air? For the public madness to die away? In face of the new Act, with its greater privileges and responsibilities for Indians, did it still trust in the best thought of India to assert itself? The mental processes of the masses were too distracted with the visionary and chimerical. The madness should have spent itself, but it did not. It was not logical for the Indians to prefer permanent anarchy and chaos to ordered government—any more than it was logical for the Japs to come down through the impassible Johore jungle to Singapore. But the Japs did. I have been in Johore, and in that particular jungle, and it is a super-tough one, but I lived seven years in Japan, and I would not put any jungle past them. Among the thousands of English of long residence in India, outside the Indian Government, how many would have looked for logic in the Gandhi-ites of 1921?

With the Alis' arrest Gandhi redoubled his defiance. He still preached non-violence, but to the mob the words had lost all meaning. The Khilafat Extremists, indeed, were becoming irritated at his continued insistence on the empty phrase. He issued a manifesto calling on Indian officials to quit their government service and organize committees in their localities to carry on agitation. The enrollment of his National Volunteers swelled alarmingly. From a general nuisance they rapidly became a menace. They forbade doctors to make their calls on the sick. They outraged decency by exhuming and mutilating the body of one who had gained their anger. They intimidated and blackmailed, till the law-abiding public were heartily sick of them. When a plan came to light for the forcible taking over

of the courts, police stations and public offices, the government was moved to proscribe the organization.

In his publications Gandhi boasted of acts which set him at the head of India's most flagrant seditionists. He declared that he had tampered with the loyalty of the army. "India had a right," he said, "openly to tell the sepoy and everyone who served the government in any capacity whatsoever that he participated in the wrongs done by the government. . . . We must reiterate from a thousand platforms the formula of the Ali brothers regarding the sepoys." He told a gathering of Boy Scouts, "No Indian can remain loyal to the empire as at present represented, and be loyal to God at the same time. . . . Loyalty to such an empire is disloyalty to God."

In so many words he dared the government to arrest him. He declared Non-Co-operation, since it aimed at the overthrow of the government, was "legally seditious by the terms of the Indian Civil Code," and jeeringly added—if the printed word can jeer—"This is no new discovery. Lord Chelmsford knew it. Lord Reading knows it." Why even then no action was taken against him must remain a mystery.

The government report, later presented to Parliament, spoke of "natural reluctance to incarcerate a man who, however mistaken his activities, was by all widely respected and by millions revered as a saint." The idea that one is to have "natural reluctance" in incarcerating a man who whatever his intentions is encouraging murder and arson with every "non-violent" speech he makes and every editorial he dictates, because an ignorant populace thinks his vagaries divine inspiration, seems to be carrying benevolence very far. The real reason—that a sufficient body of Indian opinion was lacking to back the government up, and there was fear of the reaction on the Indian Army, with consequent bloody outbreaks—was enough. But could there be any worse outbreaks than were being precipitated with him at large?

Near the close of the year the promised visit of the Prince of Wales occurred. Gandhi had described it as "an unbearable

provocation to the people of India, who did not want to see the representative of a system of which it is sick to death," and the Congress had boycotted all functions connected with it.

The Prince landed at the massive arch on the Apollo Bunder, where arriving viceroys are ceremonially received, to be greeted by Lord Reading, a large number of the ruling princes, and a distinguished gathering. The waiting crowd was enormous and the procession to Government House was a four-mile-long ovation. But in other unprotected streets rioting began when he set foot on the dock. Gandhi addressed a mass meeting at the same hour, and at its conclusion mobs armed with bludgeons assaulted the orderly crowds of Europeans and Parsees, attacking tram-cars, wrecking automobiles and setting shops on fire. In the three days of rioting that followed fifty-three persons were killed and above four hundred injured.

The heart-rending thing in these disorders was the faith of the people in their cause and their leaders. Every riot, every police charge, was laced with piteous heroisms. The rioters were not all hired hangers-on from the bazaars. Many of the killed and maimed, ignorant and credulous as they might be, were honest disciples of Gandhi's non-violence doctrine. Their spirit was the true spirit of the martyr. They knew only Gandhi the Saint. They followed the gleam. Yet they were submerged in the foaming mob, which had no thought for the position of the authorities, or for the loyal police, whose yielding would have opened a reign of violence that might have spread over half of India.

There was a plethora of arrests. Both the Nehrus were taken, Motilal for membership in the proscribed Volunteers, and Jawaharlal for distributing notices of the *hartal* ordered. Jawaharlal received six months sentence, but the government detained him only half the term. When he was released he fell to work, like Tilak, harder than ever, for six weeks, till he was arrested again.

At the Bombay outburst, which Gandhi himself witnessed, the shackled Saint in him roused and struggled for mastery. Gandhi was "horrificed." What he had seen "stank in his nos-

trils." For a breath he was shocked into self-accusation. "I am more instrumental than any other," he said, "in bringing into being a spirit of revolt. I find myself not fully capable of controlling and disciplining that spirit." But the contrition—if contrition it was—faded out before the resentment of his followers, who called it "weakness," and a new series of *hartals* and open intimidation of law-abiding citizens by the Volunteers in Calcutta and the larger northern cities followed.

The Nationalist agitators joyfully promoted the activities of the police. At their prompting immature youths begged for incarceration. Clerks, messengers, students, schoolgirls, stormed the police trucks and piled inside. They rushed the jails, demanding entrance. Presently these bulged with prisoners. "They can't imprison a nation!" said the Congress, but the police did their best. The vernacular papers played it up under the heading "Police Outrages," as proof of the unbelievable malevolence of the British, who brutally seized innocent pedestrians, male and female, by the hundreds, and clapped them into cells. The press cables hummed with the story, to harass still further the perspiring staff at the London India Office, and achieve the front page in the American papers.

The Moderates—the corporal's guard that remained—worked desperately to turn Gandhi's intention. In their name the Pandit Malaviya arranged several meetings between him and Lord Reading, but Gandhi's demands as a preliminary to any conference made it impossible. Nothing would satisfy him but the removal of the proscription of the Volunteers, the unconditional release of all prisoners (including the Ali brothers) and the guarantee of non-interference with his Non-Co-operation program. This under threat of mass-Civil Disobedience, which he announced would begin at Bardoli, in his own province of Gujarat.

In the *Satyagraha* list Civil Disobedience is the final Master's Degree, the *ne plus ultra*. It means refusal to pay taxes or land revenue, the raiding and plundering of state forests, lawless picketing and intimidation, anything and everything that may



clog the movement of traffic or the processes of authority. Could Gandhi have dreamed for a moment that such demands could be granted? The Prince of Wales, his stay in Bombay ended, had gone to visit the principal Native States and northern cities, ending his tour at the capital. At Allahabad, Benares, Peshawar and Calcutta *hartals* and boycotts were organized to coincide with his visits. Meanwhile in Ahmedabad Gandhi publicly planned the extension of his proscribed Volunteers and invited all to join them for organizing Civil Disobedience.

It is plain that his hand was being forced. He must have seen the signs of disillusion in the public, who had waited so long for the promised millennium that had not come. The British were not out. Indeed they seemed stronger than ever. More and more Indians of note were crying out against the Volunteers and recruits were falling off. It had gotten so bad in some sections that to bring off a particular demonstration street loafers had to be hired. To the masses the halo of sanctity about Gandhi's head was as bright as ever, but even in a saint promises must not fail forever.

In the last days of December the Congress met at Ahmedabad. It was a tumultuous session. The younger element were for violence, the more of it the better. Had not the British government, three weeks before, treated with the Irish rebels? Let it treat with the Indian revolutionists! There was only one further step yet to take, that of Civil Disobedience. The Congress Committee in March had had enough courage to admit that the people were not yet ready for it. In July it had voted to postpone it till the boycott of foreign goods (as exemplified in the cloth bonfires) had been thoroughly tried out. But now—when the head of the Moslem League demanded a Declaration of Independence in the manner of the American colonies, and bluntly challenged the success of the Non-Co-operation campaign—Gandhi made good his threat to the Viceroy. "There must be Civil Disobedience," he declared. "It is the only civilized and effective substitute for armed rebellion."

The exultant Congress gave him dictatorial powers, as its

sole executive agent, and in *Young India* he declared, "We have dared openly to desire and prepare the end of the existing system of government, and have challenged the administration to do their worst." The soberer heads outside the Congress were in despair. They made a second attempt to persuade him to meet the Viceroy halfway, but he was adamant. His campaign, he said, was deliberately aimed at the government's overthrow. "Lord Reading must clearly understand that the co-operators have declared war against it. We must spread dissatisfaction openly and systematically, till it pleases the government to arrest us."

The Right Honorable Sankaran Nair, who since his resignation from the Indian Government's Executive Council in protest against the Rowlatt Bills, had been active in the Moderate group outside the Congress, presided at the last of these conferences. At this final pronouncement he threw up his hands and quit. In a few months his bitter book, *Gandhi and Anarchy*, was to appear.

Possibly Gandhi, feeling his hold weakening and the ground crumbling under his feet, thought his own arrest would be the spark to the powder, and that the final explosion would inaugurate the revolution he had so long planned. Or if not, that his imprisonment would save his own face with the people. It is hard otherwise to explain the pertinacity with which he angled for arrest. When the government still declined to take the bait, he sent the Viceroy an ultimatum: his demands must be granted *en bloc*, without reservation, within seven days, or mass-Civil Disobedience would begin under his personal direction.

But at this, apparently to his surprise, the worm turned. The long-suffering government had reached the limit of its forbearance. He was given a stern warning that it would meet the campaign which he threatened with the severe measures it called for. The main Congress leaders, including the two Nehrus, were already under restraint. Now most of the others—Das the famous Bengali, Abul Kalam Azad the Moslem Nationalist, who till Jinnah abandoned the Congress had been his chief

competitor for its Moslem leadership, had been seized, together with the principal provincial chiefs and a scattering of lesser lights. Incredibly, and it seems likely to his disappointment, Gandhi was left to fulminate alone.

And in the pause, while the bewildered and leaderless masses waited for his further orders, the closing tragedy of the unhappy series he had set in motion occurred at the village of Chauri-Chaura, in the United Provinces. An infuriated mob wrecked the police barracks and beat to death and burned alive twenty-one policemen and watchmen.

The news shocked all northern India. The massacre of the Moplah rising, dreadful as it had been, had been far away. This was at the very heart of British authority. Coming only three months after the bloody riots in Bombay, it showed the public the abyss toward which the Congress had been leading India. Even the pro-British element eyed the government with a new misgiving. Was it true, then, that it dared not touch Gandhi? There was a great revulsion of feeling.

With it the strange transformation came. The Saint resumed control, and the Politician drew back in what seemed terror. Gandhi did not spare himself in his confession in *Young India*. God in His mercy had warned him, but he had not listened. "He warned me in 1919," he said, "when the Rowlatt Act agitation was started. I retraced my steps. Next time it was through the events at Bombay that God gave me a terrific warning. He made me an eyewitness. . . . But the bitterness was still to come. God spoke clearly through Chauri-Chaura."

At an emergency meeting of his Working Committee at Bardoli he called off Civil Disobedience, the courting of arrest, processions and public meetings, and limited picketing to liquor shops. He bade his followers give their efforts to building up the Congress organization, preaching his doctrine of the spinning wheel and *khaddar* cloth, establishing national schools, freeing the Untouchables from their social bondage, and other activities which could be carried on without conflict with the law.

It was a sweeping reversal. Mrs. Naidu, never at a loss for a

familiar quotation, saw in it only the ideally beautiful. "I have always felt and known," she wrote him, "that *Satyagraha*, in its deep authentic sense, is literally 'the treasure of the lowly'—Maeterlinck's beautiful phrase—of those who are content with realities and not seekers after false values and false standards. . . . Your dream was to make Bardoli the perfect example of *Satyagraha*. It has fulfilled itself in its own fashion, interpreting and perfecting your dream."

Gandhi's action shocked the Nationalists far more than all the disorders. The Congress Committee called it a "national humiliation," and would only partially confirm his orders. To the greater dismay of the Nationalists Moslem opinion veered sharply. Islam had no use for weakness. The Indian Government, too, was urging on London the advisability of revising the Turkish treaty. In a few months Mustapha Kemal, the Turkish President, was to abolish the caliphate and dethrone the Sultan, whose flight for protection to a British man-of-war was effectually to settle the Khilafat cause and leave Islam with a new-found friendliness for the British which the Congress could no longer use for its purpose. What was left of Gandhi's Hindu-Moslem alliance dissolved into thin air, leaving the two communities further apart than they had been in a century.

In his sagging popularity with the public, the Saint shamed the Politician when he said, "Let the opponent glory in our humiliation, or so-called defeat. It is better to be charged with cowardice and weakness than to be guilty of our oath and sin against God. It is a million times better to appear untrue before the world than to be untrue to ourselves."

This was the situation the government had been waiting for. The people's belief in their Mahatma's divine inspiration was for the time being in eclipse. There was no fear now of universal outbreaks. Gandhi's arrest was ordered. It created no protest. There was no excitement.

The trial, in the Allahabad court, was a short one. He pleaded guilty to the charge of sedition. Only the element of pathos

lifted the occasion from the level of the competitions in *politesse* of our old friends of the comic strip, Alphonse and Gaston.

"I endorse," he told the judge, "all the blame that the advocate-general has thrown on my shoulders. I have come to the conclusion that it is impossible for me to disassociate myself from the diabolical crimes of Chauri-Chaura or the mad outrages of Bombay. . . . I do not ask for mercy. I do not plead any extenuating act. I am here, therefore, to invite and submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime, and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen."

And His Honor, not to be outdone in gallantry, in sentencing him to six years of prison hospitality, replied, "It will be impossible to ignore the fact that you are in a different category from any person I have ever tried or am likely to try. In the eyes of millions of your countrymen you are a great patriot and a great leader. Even those who differ from you in politics look upon you as a man of high ideals and of noble and even saintly life. But I have to deal with you in one character only . . . to judge you as a man subject to the law, who has by his own admission broken that law and committed what to an ordinary man must appear to be grave offenses against the state." And he added handsomely, "If the course of events in India should make it possible for the government to reduce the period and release you, no one will be better pleased than I."

So for a space Saint and Politician together vanished from public view, and the relieved authorities were left to the task of reconstituting shattered authority and re-erecting the splintered scaffolding of peace.

## Chapter Fifteen

### TRAIL'S END

ONE must trace this tragic trail to understand how inevitably Gandhi's *Satyagraha*, however noble in conception, when applied by a people destitute of its real spirit, had gone on the rocks. It was predestined to failure.

So far as the Mahatma was concerned the show was over. He was in prison, past any more agitation for the time, and his followers, silent and sullen without their leaders, who were in jail too, were in the dumps. The chief grievances on which their agitations had been based had faded out. The Khilafat cause was wound up. The old Rowlatt Act which had caused the troubles in the Punjab had been repealed. There were no longer British "atrocities" there: under the new reforms it had a governor with an executive council, an Englishman and an Indian, and two Indian ministers for consultation on important matters.

The Moplah rising had put the quietus on Gandhi's Hindu-Moslem entente. It had been only the Khilafat cause that had brought the Moslems into his campaign. In every feature of faith the two communities had always been at sword's points. Gandhi's spinning wheel, his glorification of poverty, his non-violence, were all repugnant to Islam. The Moslems of the Congress angrily resented his seizure of its machinery, which made it even more than before a Hindu organization. His theory that caste, which they despised, was a divine institution they called ridiculous. And his overtures to the Untouchables, with his plan to make them a caste in themselves, they counted only a scheme to wet-blanket their conversion to Islam (ninety odd per cent of India's Moslems are of Hindu stock) or to Christianity, thus keeping them in the fold of Hinduism to insure the Hindu majority.

The Hindu-Moslem split seemed irrevocable. Communal feeling was more violent than it had ever been, and riots broke out in Calcutta, in Allahabad, in Multan.

Jinnah, who had been growing steadily in political stature with his own people since he had quit the Congress in 1920 in disgust, sorry for the part he had taken in the earlier ill-fated movement for unity, considered the new Congress little more than an undisciplined and hysterical mob. Like young Nehru, he is an aristocrat, but unlike him could not bring himself to hobnob with the masses. The peasant to him was a brother to the ox. Even the *Khaddar* cap, which had now become such a Nationalist badge that to appear at a Congress session without one was almost as much as a member's life was worth, offended him. From that time he threw in his lot with the Moslem reactionaries, where temperamentally he had always belonged.

Jawaharlal Nehru has recorded that in jail he received the news of Gandhi's abandonment of the campaign with consternation. With his father, he was puzzled and angry. He felt that their idol had let them down.

Was the affair of "a remote village and a mob of excited peasants in an out-of-the-way place"—so with a singular contempt for proportion he refers in his autobiography to the Chauri-Chaura outrage—to put an end, even for a time, to their struggle? What were they to do if any "sporadic act of violence" (which phrase covers the twenty-one policemen burned alive) could wreck their plans? When the fault was to be laid not to themselves, but to "extreme provocation from the police," "the numerous *agents provocateurs*, stool pigeons and the like, who creep into our movement and indulge in violence themselves or induce others to do so."

These phrases are still the stock in trade of the Indian special pleader. From a man of Nehru's mental caliber, the stereotyped picture of British agents in the guise of the tzarist *Bande Noire*, inciting the madding crowd to the violence they are laboring at risk of their lives to suppress, does not carry conviction.

The boycotting of the new Legislatures did not prove a complete success. The National Liberal Federation, under the presidency of Sastri, Gokhale's old colleague of the Servants of India

Society, was reformist and not revolutionary. While they held no brief for the government and thought the new constitution sadly imperfect, they counted it an advance toward the self-rule goal and proposed to work through it for betterment. As to the Non-Co-operationists, of whatever party, Sastri declared, "so long as they will proclaim war on the established government, talk openly of revolution, inculcate disloyalty and rash political action . . . we must sternly disapprove and stoutly oppose."

In the Congress some of the most influential leaders of the Non-Co-operation movement questioned the wisdom of staying out. Among these were Motilal Nehru and Das, both of them now in jail but perhaps stronger in than out. Das presided over the next session by proxy, and he and Nehru drew together the malcontents into a coterie, within the Congress Party, pledged to break away from the boycott and to permit members to vote for candidates and themselves enter the Legislatures. This was rebellion against the Mahatma's ruling, and the proposal precipitated a fine battle, but at a later extraordinary session they won their point. The party, however, cleverly overreached them, and at the same time purged itself of rebellion, by ruling that its members in the Legislatures should adopt a policy of pure obstruction.

The Viceroy's countermove was a clear warning that if the boring-from-within process should be successful the government would be compelled to pass necessary legislation, as provided for, by his certification, and the reformed constitution would be held in abeyance.

Lacking any unifying program, the turbulent elements drifted into the old communal ways, and the elections were fought out mainly as between Hindus and Moslems. The Nationalists took a third of the Assembly seats, with a working majority in the central provinces, but Gandhi's order carried great weight. In the Assembly and provincial councils they refused to vote on measures of general policy. Their own bills they called "the voice of the people," and when the government declined to con-



sider them they walked out in a body. The effect was at once irritating and comic.

The Central Legislature nevertheless made much progress. The Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army announced that the commissioned ranks of eight regiments were to be held by Indians. A bill to do away with race distinctions in criminal trials was passed. Resolutions were carried looking to the appointment of Indians in greater numbers to high offices of the government and in state railways.

The following spring Gandhi was stricken with acute appendicitis. Here was a problem that gave the prison authorities the gravest concern. Only an immediate operation could save him. But his view of surgery as "an instrument of the devil" was well known, and his wife's long-ago emergency operation in South Africa, when, too late to prevent it, he had snatched the bandaged Kasturbai from the apprehensive surgeon, was a legend. But there was no objection from Gandhi now. He was for it. The English civil surgeon was not all eagerness. "If you die under the knife," he said, "every Hindu in India will say I killed you." "Very well," Gandhi told him, "I will sign a statement absolving you from all blame." And he did so.

His apologia, after his recovery, is worth recording:

"I plead guilty. But that is to admit I am by no means a perfect man. Unfortunately for me I am far from being perfect. I am simply a humble aspirant for perfection. . . . As I hold that my illness was a result of infirmity of thought or mind, so do I concede that my submission to the surgical operation was an additional infirmity of mind. If I was absolutely free from egotism I would have resigned myself to the inevitable. But I wanted to live in the present body. Complete detachment is not a mechanical process. One has to grow into it by patient toil and prayers."

Gandhi was released from jail for his hospital operation, and the benign government canceled the rest of his term. For convalescence he retired to Satyagraha Ashram, announcing that he would devote himself henceforth to study and writing. The

Congress leaders were now, practically all of them, for a legal program; only the Nehrus (both released after serving a fraction of their sentences) stood out, with a few lesser ones and the ever faithful Mrs. Naidu. Das controlled the machine, and Gandhi realized that his power for the time was broken. Presumably the Indian Government thought its troubles were over, but it counted its chickens too early.

The Nehrus, father and son, visited Gandhi, and Motilal spent much argument in justifying his revolt on the Legislature boycott, but the Mahatma remained unconvinced: the dictator could not brook disobedience from his intimates. There was a perceptible strain in their relations. To Motilal, Gandhi was "a humble and lowly figure standing erect . . . on the firm footholds of faith unshakable and strength incalculable." Yet on the same page, in a foreword to a printed collection of the Mahatma's sayings, he wrote, "I have heard of saints and supermen, but have never had the pleasure of meeting them, and must confess to a feeling of skepticism about their real existence." It was the middle of the year before the pair became friendly again.

Meanwhile communal riots had reached a new crescendo, with clashes on the Moslem day of cow sacrifice and over Hindu music before the mosques in the hour of the sunset prayer. Unfortunately worship at Hindu temples is at the same hour. I lived for some months in one Indian town, my house being midway between a mosque and a temple. Though they were a half mile apart, I learned what a din of gongs and bells a Hindu temple can be capable of. During the five years following the bloodshed at Chauri-Chaura four hundred and fifty persons were killed and some five thousand injured in communal conflicts.

Jawaharlal Nehru perceived in all this only the plotting of "Moslem political reactionaries, helped in the process by the British Government," with the aim of discrediting the Nationalists. "Of course," his autobiography tells us, "there was thwarting of us, deliberate and persistent, by the government

and their allies. British Governments in the past and the present have based their policy on creating divisions in our ranks."

But Gandhi wasted no time in animadversion. Communal disorders were the last thing he wanted: they turned the popular fury against the government into other channels. The Politician was clamoring for his chance. Using an outbreak at Kohat as occasion, he sent out a call to Hindu and Moslem leaders for a "Unity Conference" at Delhi. Three thousand Hindus and a thousand Moslems answered it.

It was a strange new bid for the leadership that had slipped from him, and it was a stormy gathering, a session, apparently, of cheers and hisses and catcalls, of the bouncer's artful aid and free fights in the street. Gandhi held out the whole palm tree to the Moslems. The processions with their gongs and chanting outside the mosques should cease. He was willing to concede every demand, even to countenancing the cow sacrifice. But even that failed. Passions were too explosive. The arguments and uproar went on for days without let-up.

Then Gandhi acted. "Evidently nothing I can say or write," he announced, "can bring the two communities together. I am therefore imposing on myself a fast until a joint program is agreed upon." He left the conference and went to the house of Mohamad Ali (the Moslem with whom he had toured the country in the Khilafat campaign whose unhappy end had been the Moplah massacre) and began what is known as his "First Great Fast."

His *Satyagraha* had begun with the Passive Resistance, had passed through the stage of Non-Co-operation, and had finally graduated into full Civil Disobedience. His fast, one notes, has corresponding stages. Its earliest form in South Africa was the simple fast of one to three days, intended by the spectacle of his discomfort to melt the heart of the sinner to repentance. In the next stage (as in his three-day fast after Amritsar), it had become a penance and flagellation for his own sin of misjudgment. Here in Delhi it has reached a further degree: he takes upon himself the people's sin. This is the scapegoat the Israelites

drove into the wilderness, which has come down to modern times in the many variants of the "sin eater," still to be seen in landlocked regions of Wales. He uses it now, in what someone has aptly enough called a "moral *jujutsu*" [victory by yielding], for his purpose, to enforce his will on the recalcitrant leaders, both Hindu and Moslem.

It was melodrama if you will, but tremendously good theater—as it would have been for New York if Mayor LaGuardia had announced last winter that he would not taste food till Congress acted on a ceiling for wages and farmers. Probably no man living in the public eye has a keener flair for publicity than Gandhi. He is at one time playwright, producer, stage manager and star, and with these gifts a press agent is a superfluity. His mere announcement was good for a headline in a hundred American newspapers.

Days passed. The "Unity" assemblage dispersed, all but its leaders. They waited in what must have been trepidation. Both sides knew that under that disarmingly pliant exterior of Gandhi's lay something as hard and unyielding as a steel plate. What if he carried it through? They had their own fears, too. If there was no compromise, if Gandhi died, the people would hold them to blame. They would have killed one whom millions counted a saint. At the end of the first week messengers were scurrying back and forth between the conference hall and Mohamad Ali's house.

On the twelfth day Gandhi had grown perceptibly weaker. The doctors who attended him dissolved food in the water he drank, but he detected it. "You are trying to make me traitor to my vow!" he told them in anger, and for many hours, till they took oath that it was untampered with, he refused the water. Murmuring crowds were about the house now, reading each bulletin. Leaders of both camps, Hindu and Moslem, met at his bedside, begging him to break his fast, but he was obdurate. On the nineteenth day he could no longer speak. Then the leaders surrendered. A compromise agreement was made, and he took food,

All India, no doubt, breathed easier, even the Indian Government, which one must suppose wished devoutly it had let well enough alone and kept the Mahatma away from political temptation. However, it was too late now.

The fast made him the only candidate for the presidency of the Congress which met a few weeks later. But for the time being Civil Disobedience was dead and he could not resuscitate the corpse. Bose and his younger politicians were on top; all they would do for him was to okay his social program with its three points: Hindu-Moslem unity, the spinning wheel, and the "removal of Untouchability." He admitted sadly that he had encountered a setback. "The intellect of the country," he told the Congress, "seems to be ranged against my ways of thought and action."

Fate had intervened in 1915 to take away the veteran Gokhale, whose influence might have swerved the current of Gandhi's activity. It intervened again now and took Das, the one man whose political strength might have permanently superseded his. Das had found Gandhi's policies "futile and impractical," but death ends all quarrels, and Gandhi led the mile-long funeral procession in Calcutta to the burning-ghat. So passed Bengal's bright particular star, the leader of India's best organized school of thought, who had made over his property in a trust for his country, and at the time of his death had been laboring with fair hope of success to bring about a working agreement between the Congress and the government. Thus Fate played a second time into Gandhi's hand.

He was without his fiery young first lieutenant now. Jawaharlal Nehru, with his ailing wife Kamala and his sister, had sailed for Europe, his mind "befogged" with question, thinking "to see things in better perspective and lighten up the dark corners of his mind."

It was a significant trip. He carried with him the dark suspicions of British perfidy which he shared with Gandhi, and the Indian quasi-exiles he met, who talked revolution and were full of daring and fantastic suggestions, "seemed to have the

impress of the British Secret Service upon them." He renewed an old acquaintance with Buchman, father of the Oxford Group Movement, whom he had met in India, but the sudden conversions and the confessions offended his taste. He took in the General Strike in England, watching the disorders in Derbyshire while I was shivering in a coalless Ritz room in London, watching the machine gunners blowing on their fingers in the Green Park. I saw him in Paris the night Lindbergh's *Spirit of Saint Louis* slanted down like a great swan to Le Bourget Field. He got himself appointed India's delegate to the Anti-Imperialism League Congress at Brussels, that strange hodge-podge that for a time had among its patrons Madame Sun Yat-sen, Romain Rolland, George Lansbury the British Labor leader, and Princeton's Einstein. He attended a Sacco-Vanzetti meeting in Cologne.

His father Motilal joined him in Italy, and the party went to Moscow together, to the Soviet's tenth anniversary. Motilal was only mildly interested in the new Russia, but to Jawaharlal it was the beginning of something momentous. He came back to India doubly indoctrinated with the virus of socialism. India's industrial workers in the trade unions were vaguely socialistic, as was the student intelligentsia, but they had no definite program. Jawaharlal did his best from this time forward to give them one. He addressed himself now not to the farmers but to the workers, in speeches, always inflammatory, denouncing the mill owners.

In this more than anything else he has shown his independence of thought, for Gandhi is tender of bourgeois feelings. He needs the mill owners as much as they need him. Birla, whose palatial Calcutta home is a meeting place of the radical Congress leaders, has stood by him from the first. And Jamnalal Bajaj, the tall and oleaginous heir of adoptive millions, whose bailiwick was Wardha where Gandhi of late years has centered his activities, gave three million rupees to Congress causes.

There are a dozen or more well-heeled industrialists, of whom these are the chief, who hold the purse strings, for the

rank and file of the Congress are poor as church mice. As hard-headed industrialists they can take no stock in Gandhi's economic theories and his ideas of a return to the primitive life and the spinning wheel. What they have been interested in is weakening the British tenure, if it can be done without harm to their interests. A revolution that would oust the British by anything short of a general and prolonged disorder is their idea, and they have been willing to give non-violence a tryout, meanwhile acting as advisers when things get out of hand.

In the Central Legislative Assembly, Motilal Nehru had demanded a round table conference to draft a new Indian constitution, and the British Government, in conformity with a provision of the India Act now operating, decided as a preliminary step to send to India a commission of inquiry whose report could serve as the basis for such a constitution.

This was the opprobrious Simon Commission. Prime ministers are often more voluble out of office than in, and MacDonald (being out at the time) had declared that India should be given self-rule without any delay. This had naturally bolstered the confidence of the Indian leaders that they would have a hand in the discussions, but London thought otherwise. The Commission, as announced, contained no Indian. The blame has been laid at Lord Birkenhead's door.

Inevitably the exclusion was fiercely resented. Even the mild Sir Tej Saprú, the president of the National Liberal Federation, called it an insult to Indian self-respect, and the Moderates, Britain's stand-bys, boycotted it. The Congress not only boycotted it: it unanimously declared complete independence the aim of the Nationalist movement.

The Commission should have had Indian representation, to be sure. But on the other hand it was quite to be presumed that its deliberations would have welcomed the aid of Indian committees. As it was, the fat was in the fire. Though most of the Moslems co-operated and eight out of the nine legislative councils appointed committees to forward the inquiry, the effect on the public was disastrous. Rowdyism lifted its head. *Hartals*

and riots greeted the Commission wherever it went; it was dogged by hostile mobs shouting "Go back!" and black flags were flown in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras.

Pending the Commission's report, Motilal Nehru and a group of the left-over Moderates drafted a constitution for representative government within the empire, for presentation to the British Parliament, and his son Jawaharlal formed an "Independence League" to fight the dominion idea that had been gaining ground. They were on this point a house divided against itself.

In such an atmosphere of no give and all take, nothing could be expected of the Congress. Motilal Nehru, its president, when he left for the session, was given a great send-off at Allahabad. Thirty-six horses drew his chariot to the station. Fifteen thousand delegates, men and women, approved his constitution draft, but voted to send no representatives to London. Unless dominion status was granted by the end of the next year, 1929, the all-out battle for independence would begin with a campaign of Civil Disobedience. That is to say, the British Government was given a year's grace with an ultimatum at the end of it.

As a highlight on the picture two bombs were thrown from the visitor's gallery of the Assembly, one of them by the young terrorist Baghat Singh, later to be hanged for an earlier murder.



## Chapter Sixteen

### YEAR WITHOUT GRACE

GANDHI was busy throughout that year, touring the country for his *khaddar* cloth and spinning wheel. Now by train (third class), now by automobile, now hiking afoot, sometimes alone, sometimes with Jawaharlal Nehru, he held forth in almost every section of central India, collecting funds as he went for the aid of his cottage industries. It was the Saint, not the Politician, that the enormous crowds—"like clouds of locusts," says Nehru—gathered to hear.

In spite of the Congress gypsying over the country, and its Volunteer spokesmen haranguing from village to village, the congeries of mud huts, with their shouting urchins and slatternly women and the evening gossip of the elders have always remained stolid and unimpressed by their eloquence. What they say is not bolstered by the printed word, which the people could not read if they had it. It is the towns, not the country, which know the Congress and something of what it is all about. But Gandhi, the holy man, the peasants understood. They took him to their hearts when he told them they were the chosen people of the Lord of the Poor—to the annoyance of Nehru who, while he pitied the indigent, hated poverty and had no patience with Gandhi when he glorified it. But Gandhi knew what he was about.

It was in this year that the legend of the Mahatma's saintliness attained such astonishing proportions that the tiniest hamlet treasured the tale of some miracle he had performed, sick babies were healed of the scrofula by touching his photograph, and it was commonly held that he could transport himself invisibly from place to place and pass at will through prison walls. These stories, which are still commonly told and credited, would fill a sizable volume. One woman in Bardoli declared that he passed through the jail's stone walls every evening to address the town meetings.

Meantime, while things were still in the air, Lord Irwin, the then Viceroy, made a hurried trip to London. There it had been decided to jettison the scheme of the ambitious Simon Commission, and he was authorized to assure the Indian leaders that it was true dominion status that was aimed at, and that a round table conference would be held at London, with Indians taking part in it, to find a basis for a scheme to be laid before the Parliament. Nehru and Sir Tej Sapru, the liberal, had arranged for a meeting of a group of leaders with the Viceroy on his return, for a last effort at compromise. As his train approached Delhi a bomb was exploded under it, a portion of the line being blown away. The coach in front of Lord Irwin's was wrecked, but luckily he leaped the gap. "This," said Irwin urbanely, "should make my interview this afternoon easier."

But it did not. When he met the group—Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, Sapru, Jinnah the Moslem chief, Patel the president of the Assembly and Gandhi's bludgeon—the Mahatma was inflexible. The proposed round table conference, he demanded, must be given an express mandate to draw up a constitution that conferred dominion status immediately. This of course could not be guaranteed.

On his side Gandhi offered peace, but only at a price, his demands including immediate total prohibition of liquor in all India, the cutting in half of army expenses, land revenues and all service salaries, and the abolition of the salt tax. When the Congress met he put Jawaharlal Nehru in the president's chair and ordered preparations for a campaign of Civil Disobedience, with non-payment of taxes.

January 26, of the new year (1930), he proclaimed as India's Independence Day, when the pledge adopted at the last Congress should be taken by Indians everywhere. The British Government, it declared, had not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but had ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. "We hold it a crime against man and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country." It solemnly pledged the signer to carry

out the Congress instructions for the attainment of complete independence.

This pledge was ceremonially taken at gatherings everywhere, even in the North-West Frontier Province, amid scenes of hysterical enthusiasm.

Gandhi wrote the Viceroy, "I do not seek to harm your people. I want to serve my own. . . . If the people join me, as I expect they will, the suffering they will undergo, unless the British nation retraces its steps, will be enough to melt the stoniest hearts."

The Western mind can consider the situation only with wonder and irritation. Here was the British Government, conceding the Indian demand for a central sovereignty, willing to modify the present constitution (which could mean nothing but a further limitation of its own power) and asking only that the Congress, as the major Indian political party, send a representative group of its leaders to take part in a round table conference, which on the British side was to include all parties, to frame a new constitution. It is hard to see what more in reason it could have done. And the Congress, which was Gandhi, met its proposal with a series of incredible ultimatums under threat of a program of all-out Civil Disobedience scheduled to begin before the conference could possibly meet!

A solution, reached in friendly collaboration, in a tranquil room in London, might banish the impasse. But there might then be no need of Gandhi's leadership, and he took the obvious course to create an atmosphere unfriendly to compromise. The protests of the sanity group, typified in Tagore, the disapproval of the Moslems, did not deter him. The Saint of the *ashram* was in eclipse; the Politician was in the saddle, whip and spurs.

Gandhi sent a second letter to the Viceroy. He told him again that he regarded British rule as "a curse." It had "impoverished the dumb millions by a system of progressive exploitation and by the ruinously expensive military and civil administration." It had reduced the Indians politically to "serfdom." The Civil Disobedience he was about to decree was a "mad risk," he said,

but it was "clear as daylight" that the British government had no intention of calling off its exploitation of India.

The two strangely linked partners, it seemed, had come to an understanding. The Politician had established a working basis. Gandhi announced it to his confidants. Remembering his reversal after Chauri-Chaura, Jawaharlal Nehru was on the anxious seat. He wanted to understand, but Gandhi's explanation was vague. As Nehru translated it, Civil Disobedience from this time on "must function, even though the external conditions were unfavorable and *even in the midst of strife and violence*. The way of its functioning might be varied to suit varying circumstances, but to stop it would be a confession of failure of the method itself."

The Saint apparently had compromised, as Chamberlain was to do at Munich and Pétain at Vichy, with an impossible situation. There were to be no more spasms of self-blame, no more agonized *mea culpas*. The campaign was to go on this time, without any pull-backs on account of mere massacres. "I cannot be sure of his thoughts." (This is Nehru speaking.) "He did give us an impression that there was a slightly different orientation to his thinking, and that Civil Disobedience . . . need not be stopped because of a sporadic act of violence." It was only when the violence "became in any way part of the movement itself, then . . . its activities had to be curtailed or varied."

It seems to boil down to the question of when violence was "sporadic" and when it was not. The point was left for each one to decide for himself. "This assurance went a long way in satisfying many of us," Nehru tells us. "Sporadic: separate, apart. Occurring in scattered instances," say the dictionaries. That would have described the Chauri-Chaura horror, where twenty-one policemen had been burned alive—in his autobiography Nehru refers to it as "a sporadic act of violence." Gandhi's new definition seems to have strained his acquiescence somewhat. But the master can do no wrong.

Gandhi issued a manifesto and took the center of the stage, with all the limelights, in what is known as the Salt March,

which was to "bring the government to its knees." This was a two-hundred-mile peregrination afoot, led by Gandhi in person, of a band of seventy odd of his followers, from Satyagraha Ashram to the coast, to defy the Monopoly Law by a boiling of sea water to produce a token spoonful of salt.

Always the master showman, Gandhi chose a spectacular coup that would draw the eyes of all India. On principle it is difficult to count a salt tax anything but iniquitous, though it is common to many countries. Like the old window tax, which Paris was always quarreling about in my youth and which is responsible for some architectural atrocities still to be seen in France, it defeats its object, for the burden falls heaviest on those least able to bear it. It is like a tax on earphones that hits those already handicapped by deafness. To Gandhi it was not the amount of the tax, which came per head to about one two-hundredths of a cent annually. Even to the peasant who is too poor to afford any tax on anything, it is hard to consider a cent a year divided among two hundred people a hardship. But it touched everybody. It was symbolic of taxation itself.

The march lasted three weeks and drew headlines in every important newspaper in the two hemispheres. It made a terrific splash in the American *perfervids*, which bracketed it with Markham's "Man with the Hoe." Some thousands of Nationalists camped around the *ashram* with bonfires the night before the start, to prevent Gandhi's possible arrest. He led the men, walking with the biblical staff he affects, and the group of women who have from the first been the mainspring of his movement followed, dressed in the saffron saris they wear as a uniform. They were marshaled by the well-known Kamala Devi, the woman leader of the Congress' left-wing socialists. From one village to another hundreds of peasants trailed after the procession, and in the larger villages Gandhi addressed the crowds. "On bended knee," he told them, "I asked the British Government for bread, and I get a stone."

As pure exhibitionism it was a huge success. The bitter swath of southern hatred Sherman's March through Georgia to

the sea left behind it was not a marker to the anti-British rebellion it aroused, that echoed from every part of India.

With the departure of the cortège from the *ashram* its women took the field, under the leadership of Kasturbai, Gandhi's wife. He had entrusted to her the prohibition side of his program. She led a troop of women armed with axes, to hack down the sweet date-palm trees throughout the countryside. The palm sap is collected like the sap of the sugar maple in New England and, boiled down, ripens to an intoxicating drink that has a kick like Tzarist vodka. In this Carrie Nation orgy they destroyed some twenty-five thousand trees. It was no doubt a lesson in temperance for the husbands, though a bit hard on the Untouchables, whom Gandhi has always fought for, the homemade palm toddy being about the only solace their misery can afford.

At the beach Gandhi ceremonially boiled a pannikin of the sea water, and the breach of the Salt Law was accomplished. The news was flashed over the land and the Nationalists everywhere in reach of salt water gathered pots and pans and followed Gandhi's example. Jawaharlal Nehru, with his wife and sister, led the campaign at Allahabad, which rapidly became general Civil Disobedience. He was soon put under arrest, with other ringleaders, including his wife, his mother and Mrs. Naidu.

As in all previous instances disorders (whether "sporadic" or not) spread like wildfire. The Congress' conventional warning against violence was disregarded. Organized raids were made on government salt depots. Peasants refused to pay rents. Rioting broke out in a dozen cities, including Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Delhi. There were murders of local officials and constables. At Peshawar, in the North-West Frontier Province, the situation was serious. There were many arrests and mobs rioted in protest. Nationalist scouts had been busy there and the tribes of the border, always restive and belligerent, were inflamed. Under these influences and in the belief that the government was collapsing, Indian troops sent to quell the dis-

turbances mutinied and the mob ruled the city for ten days. It took air squadrons to bring back order.

Again the Indian government had reached the limit of its patience and Gandhi was arrested. A month later the Congress Working Committee was declared an illegal organization and its members, with Motilal Nehru, interned. .

But the campaign had gained such momentum that it went on without its dictator. In Bombay, the storm center, disorders reached such a pitch that the police banned Nationalist gatherings and parades. The crowds would not obey. They congregated in masses that clogged the streets and refused to disperse. The police fired on them with machine guns. It was Amritsar over again, on a smaller scale. The government had learned wisdom from that affair: the accounts were ruthlessly censored. The United Press story, written by its European news manager, Webb Miller, was skeletonized. Gandhi's *Young India* contained the fullest account. When it appeared the weekly was suppressed and its plant confiscated.

The story it carried was written by the most eccentric member, barring Gandhi himself, of his present-day community at Wardha, Miss Madeleine Slade, known as Mira Ben. The name, which means "Sister Mira," was borne by a celebrated mystic poet. She is his mistress of the robes, amanuensis extraordinary, watchdog of the treasury and private nurse.

She is an Englishwoman, the daughter of Admiral Slade, one time of the Indian Station. Not so many years ago, when she lived in the old Bombay mansion which the Admiral took over from the Duke of Connaught, the retiring Commander-in-Chief of the Army, she was one of the town's belles. She came out from England when Gandhi's fame as a saint was bruited abroad and was so enraptured by what she heard and read of him that she applied for membership in his *ashram*.

There are perhaps a dozen European women whose inclination has led them to Indian *ashram* life. Three or four are American, notably Margaret Wilson, Woodrow's oldest daughter, who for some years has been an inmate of the retreat of the

Bengali mystic Aurobindo Ghose, at Pondicherry, near Madras. Ghose was a fierce Nationalist of the pre-Gandhi era, one of the most rabid of the early Congress' Extremists, but gave up politics for Yoga thirty years ago.

Gandhi accepted Miss Slade only after hesitation but, once admitted, after an extra hard novitiate, she became the most faithful of his devotees. She once told a woman friend of mine that the social wrongs done the Indians by her compatriots so preyed on her mind as a girl that she determined to devote her life in expiation. She has no longer any association with her family. Except for her lighter complexion and her speech she is wholly Indian now. She dresses, eats, and apparently thinks, as one. She keeps Gandhi's accounts, arranges his interviews and writes caustic letters to anyone whom she thinks is trying to overreach him. She waits on him day and night, serving him his meals on her knees, massaging his legs—a kind of glorified slavery with no thought but her spiritual master. If you have any dealings with Gandhi, you will sooner or later find yourself dealing with Mira Ben. She was one of his company of the Salt March.

With Gandhi and most of the main leaders under lock and key, the Nationalist rank and file went at it hammer and tongs to show what they could do without them. The Volunteers multiplied. They drew a regular stipend from the Congress fund, with the support of their families while they were in jail.

This system has been in operation ever since. The Congress committees support more roustabouts than could be corralled on San Francisco's docks in a week of Sundays. Since the organized disorders of the early thirties, the Indian riot has been a recognized racket, guaranteeing wages and free food and a veneer of patriotism into the bargain.

Not only bars and foreign-goods shops were picketed, but schools, law courts, public offices, polling booths, tramways—every activity remotely connected with the government—were harassed and raided and plundered. The jails overflowed. By autumn they held more than twenty-thousand political prisoners.



It was pure anarchy that it took martial law in more than one city to put down.

The flare-up developed a new and unwelcome feature. The women were called in. They came with a rush and the female of the species was quite as deadly as the male. Before long the campaign was barbed by women's abuse and feathered with feminine saris. These to be sure were not of the polite world of the Nehru women, Jawaharlal's mother and sisters, and Mrs. Naidu. They were of cheaper mold, but just as determined, and there were any number of them. They emulated their men. They threw cobbles. They lay down in front of tramcars and when removed by the police fought back literally tooth and nail. They marched as shock troops in the van of every procession.

The women of the better class did the organizing. They camped outside the shops that sold foreign goods and shamed the proprietors into closing their doors. They taught school children to sing seditious songs on the street.

Many of them were women of station, such as Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, the wife of that brother of Mrs. Naidu's who labored in Berlin during World War I to seduce the Indian prisoners. She was educated at Cambridge and the University of London, and was one of the founders of the Congress Socialist Party. She is one of India's most prominent feminists, was organizing secretary of the All-India Women's Conference, and is one of the leaders of the modern youth movement. She knows the inside of a jail even better than Mrs. Naidu, which made good material for a recent American lecture tour.

The two Devis—Sarala, the niece of Tagore, and Urmila, the sister of Chitta Das—are two others whose names are as widely known. Sarala is a musician and linguist, and is wealthy. When she offered her services to Gandhi he looked coldly on her jewels and gold-thread sari. "My people are poor," he told her. "They earn only five cents a day." Like the young rich man of the Bible she went away sorrowful, but unlike him she came back. This time she wore homespun *khaddar* woven by her own hand and her bare feet were in straw sandals.

She is as noble-hearted as was her famous uncle.

Urmila was educated by Indian tutors but speaks several European languages. Like her lamented brother, she lives for India. She has never been outside it. She was one of its foremost pioneers in social service, has a school for Brahman women and manages a hospital founded in her brother's memory. At more than one Congress she has supervised Gandhi's meals and even cooked them for him.

There is still another Devi who belongs with this coterie. She is Mrs. Shrimati Sarojini Devi, one of Gandhi's most passionate adherents, who after the famous march to the sea organized the raids on the government salt depots.

Sapru was tireless in trying to bring peace between the Congress and the government. At his request the Viceroy even had Nehru transported to Gandhi's prison, Yerravda in Poona, for a conference. Lord Irwin had invited all three to attend the forthcoming Round Table but they had refused unless India was permitted to secede at will from the empire and the whole field of British claims, including the so-called national debt, was "investigated." The meeting at the jail had come to nothing.

And presently the releases were in train again. Gandhi was released, with the members of the Congress Committee. Both the Nehrus were freed and, it goes without saying, the women. Jawaharlal's wife had been held only twenty-six days.

There was politics this time in the release of Gandhi and the chief Congress leaders. It was hoped that they might be cajoled into further sessions of the Round Table Conference in London. The benevolence of the government, however, has seldom had such good excuse. Most of its backing and filling has suggested less calculation than weakness and hesitation.

As for the women, it was a rest cure. The Indian Government has always found it as difficult to treat a woman of the better class like a criminal as the home government finds it to treat as a malefactor a lady with a title. In India the ladies had their private rooms, their own meals, reading and writing materials and visitors. Mrs. Naidu raised delphiniums in the

prison yard. She had "a lovely time" and when the callous keepers turned her out she begged to be allowed to stay longer.

It is no wonder the Nationalists came to consider arrest more or less of a "gesture," by a government that dared not risk putting on the screws. Why should anyone mind a sentence of six years when, even if it was not suspended, he was fairly sure to be out in as many weeks? Often the excitement that followed the arrest of a noted seditionist scarcely had time to simmer down before he was discharged. Some offenders have been imprisoned up to date sixteen or eighteen times. The Nationalists make a terrible indictment of this, neglecting to mention that in most instances the actual service is only a token. For the *détenus* it means a little inconvenience and a lot of kudos. In the end the thing grew to be a joke. I have heard student ex-convicts laugh together about it. After all, is a seditionist who is a lady born and a Girton girl any less a seditionist?

Nowadays, until she has been in prison at least once, a woman Nationalist is almost as unhappy a creature as an Untouchable. She has no party standing unless she is a jailbird. After she qualifies she sports her arrest like a pearl necklace, and discretion goes into hiding. Mrs. Naidu said to me one day in Bombay, "I see no difference between the British and the Germans. The Germans murder other people, and the British murder us." A few weeks later an incendiary public speech landed her in jail again—to be freed after thirty days on the ground of illness. Yet prisons have hospitals, and people like Mrs. Naidu may have their own physicians attend them there.

In the five months following the Salt March there had been fatal riots in every province of British India and in a dozen of its largest cities. Terrorist bombs had exploded in nineteen centers. Two trains had been derailed. Thousands of small Indian traders had been ruined. The jail doors had opened to some twenty-three thousand political prisoners.

Gandhi's new doctrine of non-violent "sporadic" disorder was in high carnival, and the Politician was out in the open once more.

## Chapter Seventeen

### TÊTE-À-TÊTES AT VICEROY'S HOUSE

THE Round Table Conference, assembled in London, was a notable gathering. MacDonald, the Prime Minister, was its chairman. Some of the weightiest names in Parliament, Labor, Liberal and Conservative, including Lord Reading, Lord Lothian and Sir Samuel Hoare, were on the British list.

The Big Three of the Indian contingent were Sapru, Sastri and Jayakar. Sapru, a famous disciple of John Stuart Mill, was better known in England than many members of Parliament. He had degrees in law from Oxford and the University of Hyderabad, beside a Doctorate of Letters from Benares. He was by all odds the greatest of the Liberal leaders. Sastri, the president of the National Liberal Federation, though of a reserved and gloomy temperament, was perhaps the most cogent and persuasive orator in all India. He had as great a command of English as either Malaviya or the older Nehru, and London had no more facile an *ex tempore* speaker. He was a social success in Washington when he was a delegate to the Naval Conference there. Jayakar, physically diminutive, was no pigmy mentally; the federal Supreme Court lost one of its most valuable members when he resigned his seat two years ago.

There were a dozen others second in their own circles only to these, such as Joshi, the labor leader, and Birla, the pro-Gandhi extra-Congress millionaire industrialist. Two women were delegates. It is a pity Mrs. Besant could not have been of the group, but her public career was long over, and her colorful life was soon to close. Nine of the greater maharajas led the princes' delegation. The Aga Khan headed the Moslem group, which included Jinnah of the League. Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar represented the so-called "depressed classes." Indian Christians, Sikhs, Anglo-Indians, British resident in India, all were represented by their leaders. Only the Congress, which had

boycotted the conference at Gandhi's bidding, had no spokesman.

Possibly the most striking figure of the Indian lot was Ambedkar of the Untouchables. His is a name to conjure with in India today. By sheer brain and bulldog courage he has lifted himself from the out-caste ranks to political eminence.

His father was a soldier in the Afghan wars. As a boy his cleverness attracted the attention of the twenty-one-gun Gaekwar of Baroda, that state of the "Big Five" whose enlightened ruler in the last half century has made it a pattern for native administrations. The prince sent him to college in Bombay and afterward to Columbia and the University of London. He holds doctorates from them both, in economics from Columbia, in law from London, where he was called to the bar. On the side he took a course at the University of Bonn, in Germany.

On his return to India he became chief of the Gaekwar's chancery, where his "Untouchability" made him a thorn in the flesh. He was socially ostracized in the palace. When he carried a document to one of the prince's cabinet the high-caste minister would not take it from his hand. The servants used to handle anything he had touched with tongs—caste-intolerance in modern India is capable of such things even in a state like Baroda! He resigned his position.

Perhaps it was a good thing for him, for the treatment bit into his soul and started him on his long fight for his class. It was hard going at first. No one would rent him a dwelling in a respectable street. When he secured one by a subterfuge it was made so unpleasant for him that he had to give it up. In the Bombay suburb where he lived he organized the out-caste community in a campaign similar to Gandhi's Passive Resistance to gain them the right to use the common well where the caste peddler drank. In a final fine defiance which made him a marked man, to the rage of the caste Hindus he called a mass meeting and burned publicly a copy of the *Manusmruti*, the Code of Manu the lawgiver, which is the Hindu Leviticus. It made him famous overnight.

I first met Ambedkar at dinner at the home of a mutual friend in Bombay. In later conversations he gave me a clearer picture of the caste problem than I have found in any printed book. He strikes me as the most realistic of all the Indian political leaders I know, except perhaps Jinnah. He has a constructive mind, his convictions have clearness and certitude, and his feet are firmly on the ground. He is a student of history as well as economics, and has a huge and ultramodern library. He is a widower, never touches liquor and does not smoke.

He has no use for Hinduism or any of its tenets, and regards Gandhi with a cold and ferocious patience that bodes ill for the Mahatma if and when he has his way. He has made himself the accredited spokesman of the Untouchables, and Gandhi's plausible scheme to hold them in the steel cincture of the Hinduism that has made and kept them what they are infuriates him. If there is one thing he detests more than Gandhi it is the Congress. He founded his Independent Labor League only to fight it, and the battle is not over yet. At present he holds the Labor portfolio in the Viceroy's Council.

Ambedkar no more approves of the Western type of democracy for India than Jinnah does. It needs, he says, "the strong hand of an enlightened autocrat."

The Round Table Conference had not been called to draft a new constitution but to find the greatest possible measure of agreement on the scheme which would later be laid before Parliament as the basis for one. As a result of its deliberations, it was agreed that the future constitution must embrace the Native States as well as British India, and that a federal Legislature representing both should be formed, with a federal executive responsible to it as the British Cabinet is responsible to Parliament.

The emergence of this idea of an All-Indian Federation, with the Native States as a balance, was the Conference's great accomplishment. It was really the contribution of the maharajas, a distinct surprise to all hands. They were willing to join it, on the understanding that India continued to be a member of the

British Commonwealth of Nations. They would have no truck with the secessionists. They had made two conditions: that their rights under their treaties with the Crown should remain unimpaired, and that they should retain all their internal powers except as they chose to delegate them to the federal Legislature. This had seemed fair enough. The discarded Simon Report had found that British India was not yet ready for a responsible government at the center but the offer of the princes had put a new face on the problem. It made the scheme seem practicable.

The federation's self-government, it was agreed, should be subject to two conditions: first, there should be devised certain securities for the minorities (the communities that make up the mass of the population other than the great Hindu majority—the Moslems, the Sikhs, the Indian Christians, the Anglo-Indians, and all the rest); and second, "safeguards," certain reserve powers to be held by the British Government during the period of transition. These, whose necessity the delegates were practically unanimous in conceding, included the army and defense and foreign relations. The principle of self-rule, it was agreed, should be developed in British India without delay, and its provinces should have the greatest possible autonomy.

This was as far as the Conference went in its first session. The problem of minority security remained yet to solve. That and the question of the "safeguards" went over to a future session.

Parliament endorsed the general policy agreed upon and the Conference rose. In his final address the Prime Minister laid down the lines of the constitution-to-be, declaring that any powers temporarily reserved as safeguards "should not prevent India's advance through it to full responsibility of its own government."

The Indian delegates sailed for home. While they were on the high seas, Churchill, the leader of the die-hards, on whose shoulders Curzon's mantle had fallen, and who had washed his hands of the whole business, took the opportunity to speak his mind in an address at Manchester. With an impish instinct to

put in his oar when it could only rock the boat, he branded the Congress as an oligarchy of lawyers, politicians, fanatics and greedy merchants. "We ought to make it perfectly clear," he declared, "that we intend to remain effective rulers of India for a very long and indefinite period, and that though we welcome co-operation from loyal Indians, we will have no truck with lawlessness and treason."

Which was to make it no easier for the Indian delegates, whose job it was to win over Gandhi.

The effect of this tirade, however, was diminished by the Viceroy's announcement that Gandhi and the Congress Committee would be freed, "to allow full liberty of discussion between themselves," and that the ban against the Committee as an unlawful association was withdrawn.

On his release Gandhi went, via Bombay, to its headquarters at Allahabad, the splendid Happiness House given it by Motilal Nehru. When he boarded the train he gave out an interview that augured well. "I have come out of jail," he said, "with absolutely open mind, unfettered by enmity and unbiased in argument." He was "prepared to discuss the Prime Minister's statement with the other Round Table delegates."

At Bombay adoring crowds blocked the streets. At Allahabad the gathering leaders found him, pad and pencil in hand, practically surrounded by all the foreign correspondents in India, busily answering telegrams. For his release and resumption of power, with all its implications, were world news, good for a spread-head anywhere. During his internment, however, his good American press had gone a bit sour, for the boycotted conference had given the London boys a different slant. He had become somewhat the saintly dog-in-the-manger, which must have given him furiously to think. For public opinion in America had all along been his strong suit. Here was a chance to build it up again.

He needed all the support he could get from any direction, for it was not such plain sailing. The younger Nationalist crowd were disgruntled. There were at least fifty thousand of the rank



and file in durance and they wanted to get out. A token imprisonment was all right, but month after month of it was no patriotic lark. They were not treated with the consideration shown the leaders. Gandhi had had his spinning wheel, and Mrs. Naidu her flower beds, but they slept on the brick floors and had little room for exercise.

As for the public there was a general belief that the releases could be only the result of an agreement, that Gandhi's campaign was to be called off and that he would join the Round Table. But his instinct abhorred a foregone conclusion as Nature abhors a vacuum. His first statement jarred the newshawks into the desirable activity.

Civil Disobedience, he said, must go on. There could be no compromise on vital issues. "Black repression continues unabated," he cabled one London paper. "Its continuance would make the Congress' co-operation impossible." The government's brutal "atrocities" had not ceased. He had "unimpeachable evidence of the barbaric methods of the police." He was writing the Viceroy to demand an inquiry.

This was like old times! Once more camera bulbs were flashing about him and messengers were bicycling to the telegraph office with sheaves of cables.

The returning Indian delegates a few days later found Happiness House mourning the death of its one-time owner. Motilal Nehru was dead of tuberculosis. His death—hastened, his family and friends held, by his recent imprisonment—had left the son, Jawaharlal, more intransigent, and Gandhi bitterer, if possible, than ever.

The delegates had come back greatly impressed with the British good intentions and ready to do a little fighting for their side. The trouble was that the Congress Committee, who counted the friendly advances of the Round Table as due to fear of themselves, regarded them with withering contempt, as a handful of doddering has-beens, no longer representing any party, or even a minority, who had been taken in by oily British hypocrisy. Their principals, Sir Tej Saprú, Sastri and

Jayakar, were only an oasis of three palm trees in an illimitable Sahara of frenzied insistence.

But they laid siege to Gandhi and kept at it. The Round Table without the Congress was a wagon without wheels. He must permit it to be represented at the Conference's next session, or there could be no successful co-operation. There would be an unfavorable reaction in London, which was now promising much more than had been hoped. To demand more now was to snatch the sugarcane from the elephant. And there were the many thousands in jail: the government could not release them till the Civil Disobedience campaign was called off.

This, to be sure, must have been worrying Gandhi. And there were other considerations. The Congress was listening now to the voices of the young, and Bose, his rival, was there. The Committee had deserted him once: if he left India for the Conference it might do so again. Also the monied group that kept it in funds were more than uneasy. The prolonged disorders had hamstrung industry and a general depression was more than they had bargained for. They were frantically anxious for a period of peace. A visit of Birla from his palatial mansion at New Delhi had made that clear.

During those weeks it was a battle between Sapru and Nehru over Gandhi's decision. The Congress was at the crossroads. Sapru's way led to London and co-operation, Nehru's to defiance and Armageddon. Sapru urged an interview with the Viceroy. Lord Irwin had no objection, but the Mahatma would have to ask personally for it. For a long time Gandhi was obdurate—his diet had got beyond humble pie. But there was no help for it, and at last, under pressure, he wrote to the Viceroy asking, as he expressed it, for "a heart-to-heart talk."

The reply, naturally, was favorable, and with the Committee's authorization Gandhi went to Delhi. There he stayed at the home of the late Dr. Mukhtar Ansari, just inside the crenelated wall of the old city.

Ansari, a close friend of the Nehrus—like Abul Kalam Azad, one of the Moslem leaders who have stood with the Congress through thick and thin—was the most arrant seditionist of the

lot. O'Dwyer, the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, had called his public speeches before Amritsar, when the All-Indian Moslem Conference was more rabid, even, than the Congress, "dangerous incitements to rebellion." In 1927 he had been the Congress' president. His solid old-fashioned bungalow, on the edge of the old city and in view of the new, was a favored resort of the Nationalist leaders.

Thus began the extraordinary series of "teas" at Viceroy's House that were such a godsend to the American columnists during the early spring of '31. I remember a cartoon that reached me long afterward in South America. It was captioned "Alice in Blunderland" and showed the Viceroy (Lord Irwin) as the Mock Turtle and the Secretary of State for India (Wedge-wood Benn) as the Griffin, doing their dance for an emaciated and wizened Alice, in a loincloth and spectacles, with ears like a jack rabbit. The subtitle was the refrain, "Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, *will* you join the dance?" a testimony to the interest with which the affair was being followed in the United States.

Sometime, when the delirium has passed, when the Mahatma is safe on his pedestal as one of the lesser demigods of India's thronging Pantheon, we may know the details of those meetings in the study of Viceroy's House. Till then we have only the skeleton of what must have been an interesting encounter. For Irwin was no weakling and of a vast sincerity that all who knew him recognized.

We have only flitting glimpses through the dark curtain which shrouds viceregal doings. We hear only muffled echoes of Gandhi's demands, which were not a few.

We see him trudging doggedly from Ansari's house to the multiplying interviews—like Lloyd George, he had to have his daily constitutional, and five miles is nothing to that wiry old frame. When the sitting is prolonged to near sunset (after which his vow forbids him to eat) we see the faithful Mira Ben wending to the great entrance, fetching his fruit and goat's milk lest he miss his evening meal.

We catch now and then a flash of the humor that tinges the

daily amenities. We see Gandhi sifting a paper spill from his girdle over a cup of tea, as he says, "Thank you. I'll put a little legal salt in it, to remind me of the Boston Tea Party." We hear Irwin calling after him, when one day he starts away without his scarf, "Don't forget this, Gandhi. You haven't enough clothes on to spare any, you know."

We may be sure Gandhi's stubbornness fought hard and cunningly, but Irwin knew the game. The conditions were toned down, with a touch of compromise here and there. On the demand for an official inquiry into the police "outrages," he called a halt. There would be none. He would not have his police badgered for months on end by a battalion of pettifogging Nationalist lawyers. There would be no red herring drawn across the trail that led to peace.

At the last moment Gandhi had a prompting from his Inner Voice which almost brought shipwreck. "Bhagat Singh," he told the Viceroy, "must not die!"

Singh was the young terrorist who had thrown the bomb in the Assembly and was under sentence of death for the earlier murder in Lahore of a young English police superintendent only a year out from England, whom he had shot in the back. The Congress had made a national martyr of him, and a tremendous agitation was on to save him from the gallows.

One of the least lovely of the Nationalists' habits has been their idealization of assassination—so long as the killer is an Indian politico and his victim British. Unhappily this reproach clings to the best of them. The Sikh League, at whose conference of that year Bose and the Pandit Nehru had delivered provocative speeches, voted a resolution extolling the perpetrators of five savage and cold-blooded murders, of whom Singh was one, and another was the killer of the wife of a British officer, who had attacked her in her garden with a sword, nearly severing her arms as she tried to protect her two little daughters, hacking her to death and wounding both children. These are among the crimes that Jawaharlal Nehru ascribes to "police provocation."

With all his condemnation of violence Gandhi has always been able to find extenuation on moral grounds for political assassination, condemning the murder but opening his warm heart to the murderer. A few months later, on his arrival in London, at a reception given him at the Friends Meeting House on Euston Road, describing the Congress' non-violent principles, he spoke regretfully of those who embarrassed its aims by disregarding his teaching. "But there is a common cause between them and ourselves," he said. "They are burning for the freedom to which India is entitled."

The average youthful assassin in India, however, is burning for something besides freedom. No one loves notoriety more than the mentally unbalanced Indian student. It was youths of that stamp who in the last month of the year had shot a police inspector and killed a constable at Cawnpore; who had shot down a British officer and wounded two other officials in the secretariat in Calcutta; who had shot and wounded the Governor of the Punjab at the convocation of Lahore University and killed an inspector of police at his side—this while the Round Table was sitting in London. If the business of assassination could be rid of its glamor, there would be fewer young assassins and would-be assassins in India.

As to Bhagat Singh, his amazing popularity rivaled Gandhi's. The Volunteers hawked his photographs on the streets, and his father, wherever he appeared, was the lion of the gathering.

Jawaharlal Nehru had contributed to the sentimental outpourings that had made the misguided youth the idol of the country. Singh did not become popular because of his violence, Nehru's autobiography tells us, though he gives no clew to the real reason, remarking only, "It is very easy and fatuous to condemn persons and acts without seeking to understand the springs of action, the causes that underlie them." Of Singh in jail he paints a pathetic picture: "He had an attractive intellectual face, remarkably calm and peaceful. There seemed to be no anger in it. He looked and talked with great gentleness." Mrs. Naidu had joined the chorus too. "It is all right to punish Singh as

a rebel," she said. "We are all of us rebels. But to execute him for an excess of patriotism is a crime!"

Gandhi pleaded hard. "If he must die," he begged the Viceroy, "let it be honorably, before a firing squad, as a leader of the revolution. Let him not be hanged as a common murderer!" But Lord Irwin was adamant. If he had yielded, half of British India's police service would have resigned next day.

This was a hard blow for Gandhi, but there was no help for it. After meditation he capitulated. The Congress would be represented at the Round Table and the Civil Disobedience campaign would be called off.

In this strange battle did the Viceroy win? Or Gandhi? The point has been wordily fought over ever since. Some have it that Irwin saved the day for England. Others say he sold the empire by treating on equal terms with its arch seditionist.

Gandhi's fame in the eyes of the masses grew by leaps and bounds with every interview with the Viceroy. Larger crowds gathered before Ansari's bungalow each day to watch him start for Viceroy's House and to see him return. And each time the lean figure in loincloth and *khaddar* shawl went up the marble steps of the costliest dwelling in the world, to drink tea with the representative of the King-Emperor of its greatest empire and tell His Excellency the latest command of his Inner Voice, Gandhi's stock soared higher.

But it was not yet the end of the game, any more than it had been the end of the game when Chamberlain and his umbrella, after Munich, descended from his plane at Croyden Field, when the British press rang with praise of his statesmanship and the women in the crowd sobbed "God bless you!" The paperhanger of Berchtesgaden had had still another card to play—in fact, any number of them. And in India, while London rang with plaudits of Irwin, Gandhi was choosing his next card, which he had artfully reserved. That was to be played at the Congress, which was now gathering at Karachi, on the west coast.

Bhagat Singh had been executed a few days before the opening, and the Nationalists of the Assembly had walked out in

a body in protest. The gesture was unwise, for the Moslem members had not joined the exodus. They had sat stolidly in their places: Singh was only a Hindu. It was a mark of the undying communal hatred that was to blaze up presently over the affair.

The Congress Committee had authorized Gandhi's pact with the Viceroy. They had broadcast it as a triumph. There had been a few dissenting voices, Patel's and Jawaharlal Nehru's among them. Nehru had fought it viciously and had been brought to agree much against his will. The Anti-Imperialism League, which he had joined in Brussels during his European trip, was later to expel him for it.

The Congress was larger than usual. The great tent city on Karachi's fringe held more than twenty thousand delegates. The session opened with two minutes of silence for Bhagat Singh.

A little later it had its first sensation when the Volunteer guards reported that an army of communists demanded entrance. There was some alarm till their leader's name was announced. It was Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the most famous Pathán chief of the northwest border. He had brought a company of his "Red Shirts" to demand recognition by the Congress, and it was their costume that had caused the stir, for the color was the badge of the Soviet.

During the Peshawar riots that followed the Salt March he had been put under arrest and only recently had been released with the others. It was known that he had joined the movement for freedom, but this was the first sight the Congress leaders, with the exception of Nehru and Ansari, had had of him.

By all accounts he was a stunning figure of a man then, with bushy black hair and crisp beard, a veritable giant, six feet four in height, tipping the scales at two hundred and twenty pounds, an Indian Paul Bunyan in the making, strong as a grizzly and hard as horn. The whole northwest border talked of his feats of strength. When he mounted the Congress dais and set his

eagle's eyes on the assemblage—when Jawaharlal Nehru sponsored him as “straight in body and mind, looking forward to the freedom of his province within the framework of Indian freedom”—he got more cheers than had ever greeted anyone but Gandhi.

It was Amritsar that had brought into the picture this quaint character, called by his followers “Badshah [King] Khan,” who for the past twenty years has been known as “Gandhi-e-Sarhad,” the “Frontier Gandhi,” by many thousands of Indians who know him by no other name.

He has an extraordinary history. Khan, the family name, is also the title of the chief of a tribe, an office which is commonly hereditary. His father was chief of one of the most obstreperous tribes of the northwest frontier (who are all Moslems, either by birth, choice, or compulsion), and a famous foe of the British. Peshawar was the old man's stamping ground. He figured in a hundred shooting affrays, fought in the Mutiny and gave the Indian Government trouble all his life.

The frontier tribes resemble the wildest of the High Albanians, who are now robbing Mussolini's Italian troops of their sleep, even in Tirana. Their tribal laws and feuds are very similar. I have seen an Albanian sharpshooter hit a squirrel in the eye at a hundred paces, and in World War I they lay like snakes in the crevices of the highest peaks and picked off the pilots of the German planes that flew too low. The Pathán tribes of the Khyber border are even more accomplished snipers and have ended the promising career of many a British soldier. The Khan family is one of note in that region. Abdul Ghaffar's brother, Captain Khan Sahib, for a time Premier of the North-West Frontier Province, has a medical degree from the University of Edinburgh and was practicing in London when young Nehru was in Cambridge. He married an English wife.

Abdul Ghaffar was a close friend of the Afghan Amir Amanullah and frequently visited him in Kabul. In the disorders that followed the Nationalists' campaign of misrepresentation of the Rowlatt Bills, he had made cause with the Peshawar



rebels, and when the Afghan war was over and Amanullah's army thrown back from the passes, he fled to the mountains. Later he made submission and was imprisoned for a while but was soon released.

Through Dr. Ansari he had learned of Gandhi's theories and program, and the Mahatma's key principle of non-violence seems to have taken complete possession of him. Without ever having seen the Little Brown Man, or heard him speak, he had become imbued with his doctrine. He had founded a Nationalist school at Utmanzai, the family seat, that had become the center of an organization which he called Khudai Khidmatgars [Servants of God], whose members were vowed to non-violence. Within a few years they numbered many thousands. For uniform they wore cotton shirts dyed red. Dye was expensive and they accomplished this by powdering the red brick of the countryside in water and dipping the shirts in it, which had given them the name of "Red Shirts." The story that they ever had any sympathy for or affiliation with the Moscow "Reds" is ridiculous. They had a code somewhat similar to the rules of the Boy Scouts. They were vowed to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and rid the country of the British.

The sudden conversion of Abdul Ghaffar, the daring and reckless Moslem leader of bloody frontier forays, to the gospel of the meek Mahatma, is one of those queer things that could happen nowadays only in India. For it happened once before, some two thousand years ago in Palestine, when Paul heard the voice on the Damascus road, saying "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" Motilal Nehru had had a like mental experience, but in his case Gandhi's personality had been a factor. With Abdul Ghaffar it had been not the man but the doctrine.

He personally has never falsed it. He has lived strictly according to his vow of non-violence. And this is a remarkable thing for a man of his truculent past, in whose veins runs the most turbulent blood of the tribesmen. He has been beaten, and jailed over and over, but he himself has never, so far as I have been able to learn, lifted a hand against an enemy, British or

otherwise. Motilal Nehru revolted against the results of Gandhi's campaign, but not so Abdul Ghaffar. He has accepted all that came as unavoidable—because Gandhi said it was. If all Indians had done as he has done, who knows but Gandhi might have won out? Certainly there would have been no riots, no Amritsar, no Moplah, no disorder small or great. What would have been the outcome? It is an interesting speculation.

The trouble was not with him, it was with his Servants of God, who were far better servants of the Congress. They took their oaths and as soon as trouble started forgot them, just as the mobs have done in every city in India. In 1930, when the agitation of the Congress scouts made Peshawar boil over, his Red Shirts had got entirely out of control. They were in the bloody business up to their eyes, and there was nothing for the British to do but to arrest him with them and outlaw the organization. He had just been released, with Gandhi's other leaders, following the Delhi agreement with the Viceroy, when he came to the Congress at Karachi. Later, when he explained to his followers in Peshawar, he told them, "The British nation is the enemy of the Congress and of us Patháns, and I have made common cause with it to get rid of the British."

Nehru, in the year of the Salt March, as president of the Congress, had made a flying trip to the North-West Frontier Province to organize Congress centers, under the wing of the Khan brothers. For three weeks he had campaigned it among the wild Patháns, holding monster mass meetings at Abdul Ghaffar's home town of Utmanzai and other centers, with the giant tribesman. It had been a whirlwind success. But in spite of Nehru's report Gandhi had made no overtures to the famous chieftain. Perhaps he had not been keen then to enroll Abdul Ghaffar's fierce followers in his own campaign, for violence was second nature to them and fighting their trade. But now their leader had taken the bull by the horns and was not to be denied.

The sensation of the Khan's descent on the Congress was overtopped by another. The dreadful news of another Cawn-

pore massacre burst on the assembly. A second time an orgy of butchery had blackened a name that the historic Mutiny had already made a sinister memory. The Cawnpore Congress Committee had proclaimed a *hartal* in protest against the execution of Bhagat Singh. As he had been a Hindu, the Moslems refused to close their shops. The Hindus attacked them. The city was a shambles.

It shook even Gandhi out of his placidity. It was an untimely spoke in the wheel of his plans. The British cited the Hindu-Moslem conflicts as the great stumblingblock in the way of Indian unity. His retort had always been that India *was* united, that it was the British who promoted the communal disorders. With independence they would disappear. How could he say the British were responsible for this? It was the *hartal* that had caused it, and that had been ordered by the Congress Committee.

Each hour magnified the horror. Cawnpore's temples were burning, its mosques being desecrated. Whole families were being massacred, children slain, bodies by the hundred thrown into the sewers. Gandhi appointed committees for inquiry and relief. He sent his lieutenants to other cities to guard against a spread of the disaster. To a foreign journalist at the conference he said, "We are getting evidence that there have been secret agents at work fomenting trouble."

But the harm had been done, as in a dozen other cities before. Moslem fury was seething from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas. The Congress had made a hero of an assassin, and the ghost of Bhagat Singh was to go with Gandhi to London.

It was a haggard and sullen Congress that put the rubber stamp on his pact with Lord Irwin, when he played his trump card. He announced that he would go to the Round Table as its sole representative. He would be its voice, and he could say what he pleased. London could not get around that.

It was a jolt: there were other leaders who no doubt had been looking forward to the London jaunt at the expense of the mill owners. But there was little discussion. Only one dele-

gate, with hopeless daring, had his say: "Gandhi," he said, "has such a powerful hold on us that in his presence all thought is benumbed, all judgment paralyzed, and the courage of conviction is regarded with the greatest disapproval. I consider it an unhealthy sign of the public life of our country. Instead of proving our fitness for freedom it tends to prove the contrary."

But no one replied to him. It might have been the wind blowing.

## *Chapter Eighteen*

### THE ENDURING MENACE

EVERYBODY knows the Khyber Pass, that great twisted gorge zigzagging through the tumbled hasty pudding of mountains along the North-West Frontier Province. It is the gateway through which a hundred invasions large and small have fought their ensanguined way into India in the turbulent sequence of history. If India is to be at peace that gate has to be kept closed, and for a hundred and fifty years Great Britain and her Indian Government have kept it so.

Back of that fact is a lurid panorama of war, of a treacherous Afghanistan against which three hundred and forty thousand troops crossed the passes to defend India. Of armed forays, border fights, punitive expeditions, burned villages, executions, bushwhacking and sniping. One hears very little down in the plains of what goes on in the North-West Frontier Province. At Calcutta and Bombay, except for the talk of the cantonments, it might not exist. But it is a sinister silence.

The Khyber is the spearhead of the long line of defense, based on Bombay, that must be guarded, from Karachi down in the elbow of the Arabian Sea, up through Baluchistan, through Peshawar, the rallying ground of the Patháns, clear to Karakoram on the edge of Tibet, a line more than two thousand miles long. The defense of this line, shifting and moving, is to me a greater creation than fifty Maginots.

Back of everything else has always loomed the fear of a Russian invasion. It has hung over the British head, an ever present sword of Damocles. Afghanistan is the buffer state. Great Britain gave its amir the ready needful to equip an army and to set up arsenals sufficient to put a hundred thousand armed troops in the field with twice that number of tribal levies, and leave a hundred and fifty thousand over at Kabul to keep order. And since 1926, when the Bolsheviks invaded northern Afghanistan and captured an Afghan post, a Russian-Afghan

treaty has been signed and anxiety has been allayed on that score.

Till some forty years ago the boundary between India and Afghanistan was a hazy one. Then an agreement with the Amir settled most of it. But the Indian Government has never reached that map-drawn line. It is more a line of demarcation between spheres of influence than a boundary. There is a broad belt on either side of it, running from Kashmir on the north to the Gomal Pass on the south, that is still held by wild and warring tribes. This is the "Tribal Territory," a perpetual powder magazine.

Its people are an unholy Moslem mixture, Persian, Turkoman, Tatar, Arab, Afghan, the dregs of unnumbered incursions. Some are thought to be descended from the remnants of the Greek armies of Alexander the Great. The Afridis are the most powerful and the most dangerous, for they are probably the best shots in the world. Some of them were trained in the Indian Army. One branch of the Afridi Patháns wear curled side-locks like the older Jews one sees with outstretched arms plastered against Jerusalem's Wailing Wall. They call themselves "Beni-Israel" [Sons of Israel] and say Nebuchadnezzar exiled them to Kabul after the first destruction of Solomon's temple.

The stretch of desolate hill country between the river Indus on the east and the Afghan line on the west is Waziristan, a rugged demesne of straggling ridges and ravines. Its people are the most unruly on the planet. Every tribe is at some time or other at war with every other tribe: they act together only in an emergency, which is invariably against the British, as in 1923, when there was a flare-up of raiding and gangs of tribesmen poured over the border, murdering English people and kidnaping women, till the British Lion's roar was heard around the world.

Nowadays the raiders are discouraged by military roads and brick towers held by irregulars called *khussidars* who operate under their own head men instead of British officers, find their own rifles and ammunition, and wear no uniform. In other

words the sniper is set to catch the sniper. The plan seems to work well. The *khussidars* do police and escort duty, get their pay regularly and no questions asked. Under this plan banditry has decreased. There is now a recognized ban against shooting within a certain distance on both sides of a road, sometimes as much as a mile, but more commonly a matter of feet. The head men of the tribes used in this way are given presents for the good behavior of their men.

A few of the chiefs are subsidized, ostensibly "to strengthen their military position" as against Afghanistan, but really to keep them sweet. Two of them are "Highnesses" and rate a gun salute, like a maharaja of sorts. That old worthy, the Ahkund of Swat, whom the columnists a generation ago, intrigued by the possibilities of the name, used to write jingles about, was the ancestor of one of these chiefs of the border.

At best, however, the section beyond the Khyber is too inflammable for security. It is one of the most lawless on earth, averaging something like a thousand murders a year. Its tribesmen are well armed, with a gun factory unpleasantly near, though beyond the British clutch. But only a chief can afford to buy his rifle: the rest have to get it as the darkey got the chicken, "in the nachul way." Your wild tribesman would murder ten men any day in the week to get one gun.

These are the amiable folk for whom Gandhi has such regard. "I would give the warrior people a little subsidy," he has written. "I would introduce the spinning wheel and thus prevent them from attacking the Indian territories." (Fancy an Afridid cut-throat pedaling a spinning wheel!) "I feel that the tribesmen are in their own way God-fearing people. . . . Let the Afridis loot a few frontier towns. As a matter of fact I find I have a very considerable influence over the Afridis. If they attacked us I should merely oppose them with the weapons of Civil Disobedience, as we are opposing the British invasion."

This of tribes that the British keep "good" only by the use of a half million troops. That have attacked British India a hundred times and slaughtered men and children. That snipe

British sentries somewhere every other week for a rifle or a brass button! "There is no frontier danger," the Mahatma assures us. "No foreign power covets India." We must find some other explanation of the Japanese on the Burmese border!

Peshawar, British India's frontier city, squats on the Khajuri plain, once a grazing ground for the Afridi herds. But in 1929 the Congress scouts moved in on the North-West Frontier territory under the aegis of the Khilafat agitation, which Gandhi was backing. They flooded Peshawar with their propaganda, and when the mobs began to riot the Afridis came jubilantly down from the foothills to help in the looting. Twice they tried to raid Peshawar in force but were driven back by bombing planes.

After the rioting was quelled they had their lesson. The Indian Army rolled over the plain, clear to the edge of the hills where the Khyber Pass opens, and the flocks graze there no more. Three great square forts stand now between Peshawar and Khyber-mouth, facing the bare bouldered mountains, unwinking in the blazing sun that in summer makes their thick stone walls as hot as the sides of a furnace. From their watchtowers field glasses are always trained on the rocky slopes just beyond, where the naked snipers used to lie like brown snakes watching for a pot shot at an unwary uniform. The terror that walks by night does not bother the troops, for they do no nocturnal strolling. They sleep behind barbed wire and thick walls. By day no sentry walks alone and scouts are put out when they play football, to see that no Pathán wriggles across the plain. The troops are largely tough Gurkas, who fear neither God nor devil.

Service for officers is never long on the frontier, but it is long enough to be dreaded by the wives parked in safer districts, wondering which of their husbands will be the next to be drilled in the back. One of my friends, a week after I had cocktailed with him, was shot through the lungs from ambush while leading his troops in a peaceful march through the hills.

The native city, not the cantonment, is the least Indian of any in British India, and at my first sight of it, in 1940, I



thought it the filthiest. It is Kabul's exchange mart, where the groaning camel caravans unload their Afghan fruit and reload with silks and carpets from the Indian looms. They have been doing that for a thousand years. A jostling, unkempt city of markets and by-lanes, looking sullenly across at the forts, and beyond them to the gray-black foothills of the tribesmen. The children playing in the dusty streets were the only bright and laughing touch, and at every corner, muffled in their dun-colored robes, stood groups of sultry Patháns, scowling so that it gave me goose flesh. I had no doubt they were really as fierce as they looked.

Wherever I went I saw in the shopwindows faded photographs of Nehru, brave in his white Gandhi cap, gazing at me. It was an echo of his smashing bid for the tribesmen, ten years before, the Congress' first determined sally into the northwest. After Abdul Ghaffar Khan's early arrest in 1922 there had been a welcome calm, but on his release two years later the agitation had begun again. Soon his "Red Shirts" had been preaching sedition all along the frontier. They had taken the tribal bad men into their ranks. Peshawar was in almost open insurrection when Nehru, the Congress' titular president, had flown there and held his mass meetings.

That had not been his last visit. He had been in Bannu, over Baluchistan way, two years ago, celebrating India's "Independence Day," with Abdul Ghaffar, giving the pledge of freedom. And only last year, on the same anniversary, I had crossed his trail in Almora, close to the border of Nepal and Tibet. In his speeches there he had called Great Britain "that slave empire, which strangles freedom wherever in this world it fights for breath, which has added to its sins by the butchery of democracy in central Europe, in Spain, and by the crushing of the Arab people in Palestine!"

At this weird red city of Peshawar he had been out to win the Moslems, and he laid on the soft soap with a trowel. On the decorated platforms, under the waving flags, he told these fiercest wielders of the scimitar of Islam that "when the Arabs

rose into prominence, and in one tremendous sweep of conquest spread from China to Spain, they knocked at the doors of India but did not enter." It was well, he said, to remember that "Islam was India's friendly neighbor for hundreds of years without conquest or conflict." Whose history had he been reading?

A free Congress, Gandhi told them, "would settle the frontier question by extending the hand of friendship to the tribes." Gandhi shuts his eyes to what does not conform to his theories. But can Nehru, the realist, really believe the innate hatred of the Moslem for the Hindu is to be exorcised by a gesture? Does he not know the Moslems hurrah for Gandhi only because they think he can put the screws on England? And for him, Nehru, the Brahman, only because he is Gandhi's right bower? That they would never submit to Hindu rule in India?

Well, there were the photographs: Nehru alone, smiling, leaning against the wing of his plane. Nehru standing beside the towering Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Nehru waving his hand to the cheering crowds—of Moslems, with new Gandhi caps on for the occasion. He must have made a lovely report to the Congress Committee.

The story of the Frontier Gandhi who had marched with his red-shirted brigade into the Congress camp at Karachi and nearly caused a panic as the people at first took them for Communists had intrigued me, because he became a Gandhi-ite ten years before he ever saw Gandhi. It was not the Mahatma's personality that won him, it was his teaching.

I bethought myself that an Afghan acquaintance of mine in New York knew his brother, Captain Khan Sahib. But the Captain proved to be out of town.

By luck I met the old man, however, walking outside the city, and knew him at once from his photographs. When he joined the Congress he had been a black-bearded giant, strong as a bull. Now he is spare and grizzled as a badger, with deep-sunk eyes and a beak like Elijah. To call him a Frontier Gandhi may be all right, spiritually speaking, but otherwise the term is

laughable. He is more like a benevolent old bison. Even now, worn and bowed in the shoulders (it is said that he lost a hundred pounds during his prison terms), his great frame would make three of the wizened spindle-shanked Mahatma. He lost six teeth also in prison, but he wears no plate, even to eat with. He disdains such artificialities. When he loses a tooth it is gone for good. Those he has lost are mostly where a smile could use them.

Unfortunately he has practically no English, and though when I introduced myself the friend with whom he was walking did the best he could, he had little more, so that the interview did not get very far. But I carried away with me an impression of innate power and smoldering fire under the ashes that I shall always remember.

The government secretariat had arranged our passports, but I had to have the Afghan visa and that was not like finding it. After a night's rest at a hotel that was not a Waldorf-Astoria, I plunged through the Augean stables of a by-street and climbed the smelly stair to the office of the Afghan consul. He was not in: it was a Moslem holiday, I believe. At least it was on the first day. On the second he was ill, possibly from a hangover. On the third I began to get restive. I had been told at New Delhi that for safety it would be better to go by the Indian government lorry which once a week carried the royal mail: that would be sniper-proof, and place had been reserved for me. I hired an Afghan to chase my man down. He found him—at a picnic or a political meeting, I could not make out which—and returned with the glad news that it was after office hours. However, my passport could be stamped the next morning.

The thing was accomplished then, but the lorry had gone. By nightfall, however, I had hired a motor from the government agent, and he had found me an Afghan driver who had made the trip many times and spoke some English.

The agent had a telegram for me from Sir Kerr Fraser-Tytler, the British Minister at Kabul, who would be pleased if we would stay at the legation during our visit. I wired him

that we would be delighted. If we started in good time next morning we could make it, I estimated (having never tried Afghan roads), by dark. To be on the safe side I added to my telegram "will arrive by ten."

We got off the next morning early if not bright. At the last moment the agent held an earnest confab with my chauffeur, explaining, he said, that he had been cautioning him against going for any reason more than thirty feet off the roadway. I had seen my man slip a businesslike automatic into a handy side pocket, and a sudden doubt took me in the midriff. I said, as I thought firmly, to my wife, "I have decided you had better come on to Kabul by plane—there will be one on Wednesday."

Perhaps "firmly" is not the right word. Anyway it did not work. "What! Miss the view of the Khyber Pass? Never!" New Delhi would not have put her name on my passport if it was not safe. And Sir Kerr had not said a word. Besides, she would just as lief be sniped at as airsick.

So we started. The day was wonderful, clear and not overly hot. We ought to be on higher ground before the thermometer got too far up the tube. It was only a few miles to the big Jamrud Fort which blocks the entrance to the pass. Our passport was in order. Then we were in Khyber-mouth, and presently were skirting the edges of precipices without guarding posts or bars, bumping over concrete bridges and seeing rise around us on every side the enormous complex of defenses that make the corridor to India as nearly impregnable as human ingenuity and a thriving fear can make it.

The road wound and twisted and hairpin-turned, dipping and slanting, but on the whole rising. Sometimes the way narrowed, sometimes it billowed out into a stony valley. We could look down where the two railroads, crisscrossing one another on different levels, zigzag up the pass carrying supplies for the forts. Wherever the gorge bent at a sharp angle, so that we could see up and down the trail without turning our heads, a conical lookout tower of mud bricks was perched on a hillock, like a gigantic crayfish chimney. Where the valley widened there

were two or three of them together squatting across the gap. All along were these battered landmarks, one-time eyries for the sentinels of the Mogul emperors.

For long stretches the way seemed deserted, but once, in a vacant huddle of tumbled rocks a hundred feet away, a black fez suddenly lifted for an instant as we went by and as quickly erased itself. Maybe only a road mender, but it gave me a chilly feeling in the back of the neck. What if somewhere among the boulders on those silent slopes lay an unsubsidized ruffian with one eye on the nearest frowning fort and the other squinting along a rifle barrel! It seemed to me he might accomplish his homicide and find a safe getaway with ridiculous ease.

What history those treacherous gulches had seen, and what secrets they held! If one were to sink a shaft anywhere what might he not find? For the droppings of loot-laden armies, gorged with gold and jewels, lie along this blood-familiar trail. The tribesmen now and then find shreds of fashioned gold and coins that come eventually to the Indian museums.

There is a story one may take at its worth. A young major of the Khyber Rifles, son of a distinguished historian, many years ago while on maneuvers camped with his men in a deep ravine of the pass and dreamed an odd dream. In it he was in command of a small company of a great army in retreat westward. They had fallen behind the rest, for they were burdened with a great treasure of pillage from the Indian plains. He dreamed that, knowing they were helplessly surrounded, he had the treasure buried there in the ravine, near a cave in which they proposed to make their last stand. The rocky wall above the cave was shaped like a cleft lion's head, and the spot he chose was where the light of the setting sun fell through the cleft upon the ground. In his dream he scratched the directions for finding it on his bronze shield with his stabbing knife.

Next morning in a casual exploration of the ravine the major came upon what had been a cave and above it was a lion-shaped rock. He thought that he had seen them subconsciously the day before and that they had inspired the dream. It remained

strangely vivid, even to the markings he had scratched on his shield, though these were characters unknown to him, more like an old Runic inscription he had once seen, and he made a copy of them in his notebook as a dream curiosity. In time he forgot about the matter.

Years later, when he had reached his colonelcy, he came on the old notebook in a drawer of odds and ends, and told the dream, which was still clear in his mind, to his regimental chaplain. The chaplain was a scholar. He recognized the words and lettering of the inscription as classical Greek, of a dialect but little known and almost as rare as the fragments of ancient Gothic. The colonel had never known a single character of Greek in his life.

I wish I knew the end of the story. It deserves to have one.

Landikotal, thirty miles or so in, is the soldier's town, a place of sedate tree-lined roads, fresh-painted barracks, drill ground and officers' dwellings with gardens gay with flowers. Wherever he goes the British officer somehow manages to do himself well, even in a waste. He refuses to let either aridity or isolation get him down. Peake Pasha, the famous Englishman of the Arabian desert who developed the Transjordanian gendarmerie, one of the trio whose other members were Lawrence and Philby, made his headquarters in the unspeakable town of Amaan (the biblical Philadelphia) into as lovely an oasis as I have seen between Lebanon and Mecca. He told me that to the Englishman, anchored in the drab places, it was a kind of moral discipline, like putting on a dinner jacket in the jungle. There may be something in it—for the English. In the Philippines we Americans, when it comes to clothes, have preferred a spot of comfort to any amount of soggy "side," and let the moral discipline go hang.

At Landikotal the soldiers were playing very nifty rugger on a green-hedged lawn, with good-looking women, officers' wives and daughters, watching from shady benches. It was hard to believe that a flea's leap away sentries were pacing, watching over their section of that narrow streak of smoldering gorge

serpentine between miles of tribal bravos avid with hate of the white-faces. A ruddy young lieutenant, looking as if his valet had just horned him into his jacket, politely got up and gave my wife a seat. We had tea (Lipton's) at a tea shop before we hit the road again.

Five miles more of fair going and we were at the high point of the pass, Landikhana, with its biggest fort of all. From the rise behind it one got a stunning view of the whole works. Far to the south, beyond the crags of the Hindu Kush glittering in their white loneliness of snow, lay Kohat, where twenty years ago fifteen-year-old Molly Ellis was abducted and held for ransom. To the west one could look through the last V and glimpse the red-brown Afghan plateau stretching to the horizon.

There was only one more fort to negotiate, then we were at the frontier, which was a mere white-painted pole across the road with a slouchy armed sentinel smoking a vile-smelling cigarette. But the might of all Great Britain stood in his dusty shoes. At one side was a white stone, shaped like a sugar loaf, bearing the crisp legend, "Limit of British India."

A little beyond, at a deal table under a tree, sat a burly Afghan police officer with a bushy black beard and a fierce but kindly eye. He stamped our passport, thanked me for the rupee, and we were free of Afghanistan—at least as free as any foreigner who speaks the tongue of the Englishman can be in that English-hating country. Though officially the Afghan Government is friendly to Great Britain, no Briton except those attached to its legation and consulate can live in Afghanistan. That is the law.

We were in treed land of green hills now for a while, which merged imperceptibly into gray desert. Here and there a few huts of beaten earth by the roadside, vocal with children, goats and dogs, and with a graveyard near by dotted with piles of loose cobbles or pathetic headstones of roughly modeled mud. This was a village. At intervals, a half mile from the road, a great walled *khan*, an exaggerated hostelry less inn than town, where the caravans stopped, with stout timbered gates through

which loaded bullocks and elephants came and went. The gates closed at sunset and the caravans and their cargoes within were safe from brigands.

There was a bit of traffic on the road, lorries and an occasional rattlety-bang motorbus with screeching brakes and an exhaust like an ancient wood-burning locomotive. From their disgraceful fenders, I imagine they had hit everything possible. The bottom of a deep ravine was the only fit place for them, and probably most of them have long ago ended their careers there. Just on the lip of one wicked gulch a string of the weird two-humped Bakhtrian camels, loaded to the gunwales (has a camel gunwales?) with pallets, firewood, dirty children and bundles, and with upside-down chickens, nets of vegetables and metal cooking pots swinging from their girths, stalked into the road from a side trail just as our car whirred past, and the leader shied and came within an ace of going over the edge.

Along the road were many mounds of dried earth, manifestly Moslem graves. I asked the chauffeur about them and he said, succinctly, "Indians. Ali Indians."

I knew what he meant. He meant the Khilafat tragedy. In India, Gandhi's alliance in 1920 with that pro-Turkish party led by the notorious Ali brothers, which was agitating to compel the restoration to power of the deposed Sultan, had produced the terrible revolt of the Moplahs of Malabar.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan had taken it up in Peshawar and his Red Shirts had set the North-West Province ablaze with Moslem riots. The Alis had preached that England was a robber country, intent on dismembering Islam, an infidel land which all true sons of the Prophet should forsake. In response to the call thousands upon thousands of ignorant Moslems in the northwest had sold their property in British India for a song, piled their poor belongings on carts and asses, and afoot, with their families, the pitiful exodus trudged through the Khyber and took the heartbreaking trail for Kabul. Eighteen thousand went through the pass in a single month.

The Afghans had no desire to see their country flooded with



poor Indians. No village would receive them. The wild people stripped them of all they had. They died, the weaker women and children and the aged first, then the hardier men. These mounds of dried earth strewn along the road were their graves. Those who finally got back to India were homeless and penniless. Another score for the fever of religious antagonism that afflicts India!

At noon we ate our box lunch, then on, mile after mile through the sunny afternoon. There were a few dubious fords, for the Afghans do not go to the trouble and expense of building bridges. Where the road crosses a stream they bulge out its bed into a wide expanse and build a flat causeway on which the water spreads out and you splash through, up to the axles maybe, but quite safely. Trees grew into the picture and soon came orchards and flocks of sheep. On the slopes of the hills were clusters of the black tents of the nomads, made of goat's hair beaten into a thick felt, exactly as in Arabia.

It was near one of these fords, in a desert stretch, that we had our only adventure. A frowsy scalawag, with a scar slanting across his cheek and the wildest beard I think I ever met, materialized out of nowhere, landing like a catamount on our running board. The chauffeur stopped, I suppose in sheer surprise. Everything I had inside me stopped too. Neither my wife nor I was able afterward to remember whether she screamed or not. The fellow was as wild-eyed as a mad *mullah* and had evil-looking knife handles sticking out of his girdle. He exploded into speech, the chauffeur trying to translate between discharges. His wife had decamped with another man. They had taken his ass and all the bedclothes. He must have a lift so that he could follow her. Our car could surely overtake them. How long had they been gone? Two days—he had been away selling a sheep.

My wife put something into my hand. It was a bottle of smelling salts she had been advised to carry for the high passes. "Try this," she suggested. I gave it to the man. "Tell him to smell it," I said to the chauffeur. "If he takes a good deep

breath he will be able to see the route they have taken." The poor wretch drew the stopper with his teeth and inhaled deeply. A look of strangled terror darted to his face. I think he took me for a foreign warlock of great puissance. The next second he had dropped the bottle and was gone, leaping and bounding among the rocks. We went away also, even faster.

A little magic is sometimes a great help. It is the only thing a wild Afghan is afraid of.

Jalalabad was halfway. It is like nothing but Jalalabad. For three or four miles the road had been lined with huge and ancient trees and its streets were shaded with them. In the town we saw many people with light skin, blond hair and blue eyes. It seems this is a distinct Afghan type, similar to the auburn strain in Italy. The town looked drowsy and indolent and peaceful enough for one with such a gory record. It must have looked very different in that hard winter, just a hundred years ago, in the second Afghan war, when the British held it so long and so bravely against such odds, as they held Lucknow in the Mutiny days twenty years later, till relief came.

And as we drew out on the last lap of our journey I thought of the tragic debacle of Elphinstone's army in Kabul, to which we were bound. Like Chinese Gordon and his little band at Khartoum, they could neither go nor stay. Winter was upon them. No relief could come.

Elphinstone was an old man, infirm and of impaired judgment. In footling overconfidence the officers had been allowed to bring their wives and children from India. The trouble began with the usual insults and wary looting. Stores melted away. Discipline grew lax. Burns, the political agent, then Macnaughten, the envoy, were murdered. When the troops' retirement was at last decided on, the agreement covering the retreat signed, they started, leaving everything behind—guns, treasure and hostages, Elphinstone himself among them. An enormous indemnity was to be paid on safe arrival at Peshawar.

Sixteen thousand five hundred men, women and children, trudging through the icy snows, like Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, a straggling, frozen line, going into the death-trap of

the fatal Jagdakak Pass! Army and followers, guns, standards, reputation, honor, all were wiped out in what dreadful scenes one can guess. What became of the women and children? In my mind's eye I saw the desperate fugitives, the yelling hordes sweeping in in their thousands, raging with fanatic Moslem hatred. I saw the grim remnant of Britons, their cartridge belts empty, hacking and hewing with feeble swords and their clubbed muskets lifting and falling, till the last went down on the bodies of the Afghan slain. First and last Great Britain has paid a great price for the safety of India! Which India of today owes her.

I shut my eyes and the dimming sunshine faded into the bitter night when the lone survivor of that brave host, Dr. Brydon, staggered into Jalalabad, wounded and bleeding. Eight months afterward, when the British took Kabul, Elphinstone was dead. The handful of hostages left alive came back to Peshawar. Brydon lived to fight in the Mutiny and be wounded by a spent bullet that came through a Lucknow window, lived to a peaceful old age in Scotland raising sheep. So strange is destiny!

Lady Butler's painting, "The Remnant of an Army," is still one of the famous canvases of the Tate Gallery. The figure is Dr. Brydon. Dreadful chromos of it are still to be seen on the walls of English country inns.

Night came and it was eerie riding through the dark that shut out the road like a black curtain, chasing our headlight beam around curves and skirting precipices—for we had now to negotiate some ten-thousand-foot passes. Once, slithering around a bend, we almost collided with an elephant. I could swear we grazed the big beast, but he never *hrumpped*. I wonder if an elephant walks in its sleep, like a horse.

It was after nine when we reached the outskirts of Kabul and pulled up at a police station the chauffeur said was customs. It was lighted and the door was open, but though we hooted no one appeared. The custodian was probably asleep. "Go on," I said. "It's not our fault if nobody's here. We've nothing dutiable anyway."

He shook his head and looked scared. Perhaps they used the

*bastinado* in Afghanistan. But the shadows were thick and the nearest street lamp a long way off. I reached my foot and stepped on the gas for him and we shot away with a jolt that nearly took my head off.

The British Legation was a mile further and when we rolled into its wide gate its lighted front looked as big as a wing of the Tuilleries. A smart footman met us under the porte-cochère and presently our traps were out and Sir Kerr and his charming wife and cousin were greeting us in the hall.

Sir Kerr looked relieved. After all, things did sometimes happen on the Kabul road, even in the quietest times, and the intelligent telegraph office had changed my "at ten" to "at tea." We did not discover for some days—and then learned it by accident—that Lady Fraser-Tytler had gone to the trouble of asking some of their diplomatic colleagues in to meet us at tea. What a churlish return of ours for such kindness!

We enjoyed every minute of our week in Kabul cradled in the legation's perfect hospitality. We drove all over the place, which was guttural with Germans. There were two hotels, crammed with them and a sprinkling of Italians. The Italian Minister had been stationed at Tirana after my own service there, and he told me how cleverly Mussolini had stolen a march on King Zog and invaded his little Albania the night his queen was expecting his longed-for heir. I had been at their wedding, and the trick did not seem so brilliant when I thought of the lovely Geraldine and her newborn baby, fleeing to the Greek frontier, where she lay for weeks between life and death.

Kabul has changed little in the twenty years since Lowell Thomas wrote of it. It is a surprising town. One is constantly seeing something odd—such as an elephant between shafts, pulling a cart with six-foot wheels, or a gaunt wolfhound guarding a baby. On its rim, on a grassy hill, is the tomb of Baber the Lion, the founder of the Mogul Empire, and in another section a knoll covers the pyramid he built of ninety thousand human heads. I bought a scrumptious Circassian dagger in a side street, and some odd Afghan stamps of an aged philatelist

whose shop was a wooden table and a tin valise. I also accomplished some kodachrome shots of which I am proud. One was the march-by of a regiment of Afghan infantry, which I snapped from inside my car, through a slit in the blind. Few, if any, photographs of the Afghan Army, I believe, manage to get out of the country.

One day we picnicked in Kabul's summer resort at six thousand feet altitude, with a sky line of snow peaks, a lovely place of gurgling streams and shining silver poplars, where the plum blossoms were making the air sweet with their short life. It had a vast stadium where Amanulla, the exiled Amir, used to hold elephant races.

It was too bad about Amanulla. He made a trip to Europe and was stung by the gnat of improvement. When he came back he laid out broad boulevards and built a model parliament building, a museum and a palace. He might have weathered the storm that was raised over the expense. But as an unlucky afterthought he decreed that all Afghans must shave their beards, and that was the end of him. He is living now in exile in Rome and making no more improvements.

I found ensconced in Kabul another exile. That was the old ex-Emir of Bokhara. He had visited in St. Petersburg in the old tsarist days when I was *Chargé d'Affaires*, and I had met him, dapper, blond-bearded and magnificently dressed, with a curved sword scabbarded in turquoises, at a reception at the Winter Palace where he was quartered. He was an amusing barbarian. Princess Golitzin, the Grand Mistress of the Robes, told me that when he left the rugs and brocades on the walls of his apartment had to be thrown away. It seems he had executed with his own hand and on the spot one of his chefs whom he suspected of having treated his ragout with powdered glass. Lying like a gentleman, he assured me that he remembered me very well.

Kabul is always a hotbed of politics. That is why it is so fascinating. No doubt politics was back of Solomon's marriage to his Afghan princess, the Bakhtrian girl who wore the red

trousers. The country has been wooed by many monarchs in its time and the wooing still goes on. King George had just sent the young ruler a splendid Rolls-Royce with silver trimmings. Sir Kerr had suggested a limousine, but the Amir had held out for a speedy roadster. We used to see him flying along in the suburbs at a terrific pace.

The real thrill of our tiring return trip skipped out of the dreary desert, when we made a detour to avoid a swollen river and hit upon a lovely green isle of trees that looked like a mirage. It was the famous Nimla, the Mogul garden built by Shah Jehan for his Persian bride, his lady of the Taj Mahal. There were rows of lofty cypresses and giant *chenar* trees, with vistas of the far, shining snow mountains. The masonwork on fountains and bridges was still intact and the icy water gurgled and tinkled as it flowed through the channels his artificers had laid. We spent the night there in an orange-scented inn and breakfasted on boiled eggs and apples. With all its suggestions of beauty and love it was a strange contrast to the stony Kabul we had left, with the grim walls that had seen such hatred and tragedy.

We were the last foreigners but one to take the Kabul road before it closed up as tight as a bottle for the duration.

Great Britain's legates across the northwestern frontier must be a stout lot, and I do not altogether envy them. When I asked Sir Kerr if the London insurance people counted him a good risk, he said, "Fair. There have been four ministers here before me and only two of them were murdered."

## THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

LORD Irwin presently sailed for England, leaving his thankless task to Lord Willingdon, his successor, who had a different program. His motto was Burke's: "There is a limit at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue." He was no altruist, no peace-at-any-price man. Sir Esmé Howard (later Lord Howard of Penrith) when he was Ambassador in Washington once told me that he had two basic rules that had governed his diplomatic career: never to do anything secret and never to do anything clever. Willingdon would have subscribed to them. For cleverness he substituted common sense, which was better adapted to the solution of viceregal problems. It is itself a kind of genius. He had been Governor of Madras and of Bombay and knew India inside and out.

He treated Gandhi, who visited him at Simla, the summer capital, simply as one of the Indian leaders, not as *the* Indian leader, and made it clear to the Mahatma that the era of high-souled haggling was over. To the old guard, who were almost despairing of bringing home to the Congress the salutary knowledge that in spite of all the past jockeying the government was the stronger when it came to a showdown, it must have been like a gust of fresh air in the sultry season.

The opening of the second session of the Round Table was delayed, to the regret of Willingdon and the Indian Government. For except for scattered echoes of the "no-rent" campaign, things were almost peaceful, and with the incalculable Mahatma at large it seemed risky to delay. But the Cawnpore outbreak had been no good omen: Sir Samuel Hoare, the new Secretary of State for India, in Commons had even suggested a doubt whether the Indian atmosphere was friendly enough at present to proceed. This suited Gandhi, who wanted time for the communal sore to heal over. The greatest danger was an outbreak on the northwest border. He was bent on making a visit there,

but the trouble with Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Red Shirts was too recent, and the government would not permit it. Nor would it let him send Nehru. It would have been like tossing a torch into a tank of gasoline.

Some new delegates had been added to the Conference's general Indian list, two of whom, the Pandit Malaviya and Mrs. Naidu, accompanied Gandhi on the voyage. A stickler for caste ceremonial and Brahman purity, Malaviya outraged the religious law by crossing the sea, but had a special kitchen built aboard the ship and carried a supply of Ganges water, with cowdung ashes for worship. Mrs. Naidu, of late years Gandhi's special counselor, carried her unfailing charm, her eloquence, and a trunkful of bewildering silk saris. Bald and paunchy Mahadev Desai, the Mahatma's invaluable private secretary, an assistant secretary for good measure, with Gandhi's son Devadas as bodyguard and Mira Ben to keep the books, made up the party.

The Extremists were not all pleased with the pact. At the Karachi Congress a few "Down with Gandhi" banners had been flaunted, and the youth and labor organizations had staged a half-hearted demonstration when the *Rajputana* sailed from Bombay, but he made an effective and well-advertised exit.

In London, everywhere but in the Conference chamber, Gandhi was an unparagoned success. He was no longer the Gandhi of 1914; time had taken care of that. He was sixty-three, bowed and grizzled and growing old, yet vigorous still. The Fourth Estate had done full justice to his coming, and the shaven head, the big silver-rimmed spectacles and flangent ears, were as familiar to the reader of the pictorials as Hitler's forelock or Mussolini's gibbous chin is today. The Grand Cham of Tartary riding down Piccadilly on a white elephant would not have created half the sensation Gandhi made in his loincloth and *khaddar* shawl.

The sleuth hounds of the press trailed him in droves. They haunted Kingsley Hall settlement in east London, where Muriel Lester put him up, and the private house at 88 Knightsbridge



where he did his writing. He made broadcasts to an America eager to hear his voice on the radio. "I would rather wait till eternity," he told his transatlantic audience, "than commit one act of violence to achieve India's independence." Only one American commentator observed that a moral assault could be as violent as one made with a club.

The crowds about the entrance to St. James's Palace where the Round Table sat were not there to see the mahajahas in their top hats and morning coats. They were not there even to see the radiant Mrs. Naidu. They were out to catch a glimpse of the small shriveled ascetic, with his bowed spindle legs and his mild childlike eyes, Churchill's "half-naked fakir." The loin-cloth became responsible for as many quips and wisecracks as Chamberlain's umbrella inspired in 1939. It gave the Little Englanders one of their saltiest *bon mots*: they said Gandhi wore it because the half-naked state was symbolic of the way England had stripped India.

Half-naked he was, literally, yet brown skin is in a sense a garment to folk who recognize nudity only when it is white. He typified India as the man on the street imagined it, and somehow the simplicity of the *khaddar* drape and loin-cloth belonged to the queer figure as no Bond Street outfit could have done. Even in St. James's Palace they lent a certain air of truth and authority to the little man who wore them. For the crowds "good old Gand-eye" took the starch out of all the other delegates.

Luckily the weather was balmy that season in London, or Gandhi might have found the shawl and loin-cloth, devised for the sickening heat that shimmers over the Indian plains in so large a part of the year, a dangerous luxury. For he never varied the costume. He wore it at Lambeth Palace where His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury entertained him for three days. He even wore it at his formal presentation to the King at Buckingham. That stately pile has seen some odd visitors, but none, it is safe to say, queerer than the Mahatma. No doubt George V enjoyed the call as much as Gandhi did. When some-

one asked the little man if he had not found the costume embarrassing for such an occasion, he remarked, "The King had enough on for both of us."

His callers, naturally, were legion: Laurence Housman, who had greeted him at Kingsley Hall on his arrival; the King of the Costermongers in his pearl buttons and the stout Gloucestershire farmer whose herd of goats furnished his daily beverage; Bernard Shaw, Krishnamurti (who had repudiated the title of messiah conferred on him by Mrs. Besant); Major Yeats-Brown, author of *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer*; and many others. Charlie Chaplin had a narrow escape: when his telegram asking an interview arrived it was about to be waste-basketed. With his unerring instinct, however, Gandhi called Desai and demanded, "Who is this man Chaplin?" And, learning the mimist's fame, he overruled the decision. He received Charlie one evening at the house of a friend in Canning Town. The street was glutted with pressmen and curiosity seekers, who had learned of the coming visit, and who broke down a wall, erupting into the little front room where the two publicity masters sat—a lovely break for the cameramen. One only wishes Charlie McCarthy had been there. After the departure of the crashers, the evening closed with prayers.

Gandhi had to be told, also, who Lady Astor was, when he met her at a reception. Later he dined at her house in St. James's Square (bringing his spinning wheel to spin his quota on the drawing-room rug before his nuts and goat's milk), in company with Lord Lothian and her Christian Science lecturer, where Lady Astor banteringly called him a humbug and they chatted of Hinduism and Mary Baker Eddy.

In these off hours it was neither the Saint nor the Politician who held sway. It was a tricky Puck, who in some mysterious way has been playfellow of them both. One can imagine what a windfall Gandhi was to the prosy routine of Fleet Street. The pink 'uns used to carry on an inside page a daily "box" recording his sayings, and few of them were not genuine. One day at the Conference a newspaper artist, making a crayon sketch of

him, looked up to ask, "How long do you think it will be before you convince England that India should have independence?" Gandhi reached for the pencil and added to the chin of the sketch a sheaf of luxuriant whiskers. "That long," he said.

A Reuters reporter asked him, "What chance do you think the Round Table Conference has of success?" Gandhi had answered the question more times than he could count, each time in a different and most engagingly noncommittal way. This time perhaps both Saint and Politician were tired of it. He shook his head. "You've milked me as dry as my favorite goat!" he told the reporter.

When the Conference was not sitting—and sometimes when it was—Gandhi enjoyed himself sight-seeing. Desai was a conscientious private secretary and Mira Ben took care of all bothersome details. On week ends he went off on jaunts through the countryside, with his retinue in native dress.

These ministered to his characteristic love of public notice (not unshared by other public characters, from Disraeli and Byron to Chauncey Depew and Shaw), of which there are so many evidences in his writing. The craving for publicity grows with its exercise, and it had long ago become a necessity to Gandhi. The reception need not be favorable; it was the public notice that counted. He visited the Dean of Canterbury and the Bishop of Chichester, spent a week end, accompanied by Mira Ben, with Lloyd George at Chert, addressed the boys at Eton and was entertained by the Master of Balliol at Oxford.

One of his side trips was to Blackburn, in Lancashire, whose mill towns, once prosperous, were poverty-stricken as the result of his Indian boycott of British goods—a retribution, the Nationalists pointed out, for the ruin many years ago of Dacca, the eighteenth-century Indian Lancashire, by the British tariffs. It seems not to have occurred to him that the pinched and idle people would lay the blame where it belonged, on their own government. Presumably he had looked for brickbats, and wrote in delighted surprise, "The operatives, men and women, hugged me. They treated me as one of their own!"

To the assembly in St. James's Palace he was an aggravating conundrum. His speeches gave the illusion of logic but, analyzed, were either obscure or ambiguous. In this first press interview he had said that in face of its difficulties at home the British Government would not be likely to refuse India's demands at the cost of a renewal of Civil Disobedience. And throughout the proceedings the threat was never lost sight of. The Congress demands, voiced through him, were made at pistol-point.

Toward the close the less militant delegates adopted the same minatory policy, as when Sir Phiroze Sethna, the Parsee leader, came out with a blunt "Are we to have another and a greater upheaval in India? If people here think that guns, airplanes or ordnance will be able to effect sufficient control of the situation, I may be pardoned for observing that they will be living in a fool's paradise."

In the Conference chamber Gandhi sat on the left of the Prime Minister, beside Mrs. Naidu, a humped and enigmatic figure, wrapped in his homespun shawl, silent and inscrutable. Bernays, the sparkling correspondent of the *London News Chronicle*, now an M.P., says that he was always tired and that "at important conferences he could hardly keep his eyes open." Perhaps, knowing the end from the beginning, there was small reason, much of the time, why he should. His colleagues of the Moderates, Sapru, Jayakar and Sastri, could not make him out. But long before the game ended they must have known what the result would be.

The two main problems before the Conference were the structure of the federation's legislative and executive bodies and the minorities question.

The Structure Committee found Gandhi childlike and bland, but encased in an imperviable hardness. He was under instruction from the Congress to submit to the British Government a bill of well over a billion pounds sterling, made up of claims for restitution, including an estimated cost of the 1857 Mutiny! He told the committee that under a national government in India, capitalists, both British and Indian, "no matter what

interests are concerned . . . will be dispossessed, I may tell you, without any compensation."

The minorities question involved the number of seats to be assigned to the various communities and the method of selection of their candidates. In its committee Gandhi's course was as nicely calculated for pure and simple obstruction. He took the baffling attitude that he was the only delegate who had been elected by his constituency: the rest were merely appointees of the government and could have no true representative quality. The Congress, he announced, while it would accept any solution acceptable to the Hindus, the Moslems and the Sikhs, would not be a party to special reservations or separate electorates for any other minorities, which left the Indian Christians (there are between six and seven millions of them), the Anglo-Indians and the rest, as Ambedkar expressed it, "out in the cold."

When Ambedkar demanded separate electorates for the Untouchables also, Gandhi declared, "I claim myself, in my own person, to represent the vast mass of the Untouchables. If there was a referendum I would get their vote and I would top the poll."

This drew a peppery rejoinder from Ambedkar. The Mahatma, he said, was always claiming that the Congress stood for the Untouchables and that therefore he alone represented them. There might be people in the Congress who showed sympathy for them, but the Untouchables as a class were not in the party. It was not they who were clamoring for immediate transfer of political power from the British to the Indian people. He had not the slightest doubt that, if the Untouchables could have been given the chance of choosing their representatives at the Conference, he would be there. "Whether nominee or not," he said, "I fully represent the claims of my community. Let no man be under any mistaken impression as regards that!"

The principle of separate electorates for minorities was no new thing. The Moslems had been given them in the Morley-Minto Reforms. But to give them to the Untouchables would make these a political unit, distinct from Hinduism of which

they were a part. If they realized their strength they might throw their vote to other than Hindu candidates and thus imperil the Hindu majority. In that lay Gandhi's power, and he fought Ambedkar's demand viciously. He did so on the ground that, unlike the Moslems and Sikhs, there was no religious distinction separating the Untouchables from the Hindu majority. It would be reading them out of Hindu-dom.

The argument was a poor one, for by no means all of the nineteen minorities were based on religious or even racial grounds. There were, for instance, the categories of commerce and industry, and the landholders. And besides, Gandhi opposed giving the separate electorates to the Indian Christians, where the distinction was purely a religious one. As for the Untouchables, as Ambedkar and his colleagues pointed out, they were separated from the rest of the Hindus now by a social gulf infinitely greater than that which separated Moslems or Sikhs from the majority. Anyone who has lived a month in India knows that is true. The Untouchable may be a part of Hinduism, but he cannot enter a Hindu temple. Its Brahman priest will not bless his house. The Hindu barber of the lowest caste will not shave him, even if he is a graduate of Oxford or of India's proudest university, nor will the caste Hindu wash his clothes. The caste Hindu peddler will not eat with him, and will kill him if he aspires to marry his daughter. It was no case of "Whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder": the caste Hindu and the Untouchable could never be further apart than Hinduism had made them already.

Ambedkar, Untouchable of the Untouchables, made an enviable reputation at the Round Table. He has a force of delivery, a vigor of vocabulary, that made much of the flowery oratory wasted there seem flaccid and insipid.

At Gandhi's behest the committee split into informal groups in a hopeless effort to find some ground for agreement, but the discussions came to nothing. If the Moslems and the Untouchables agreed, the Hindus would dissent. The Indian Christians and the Anglo-Indians might get together, but the Sikhs

would demur. It ended by each community putting its own plan on file: there were Gandhi's Congress scheme, Malaviya's *Mahasabha* scheme, the labor scheme, the women's scheme—a staggering mountain of data and memoranda that called for months even to read, let alone adjudicate.

There had been need for good will, the father of adjustment and compromise, in those discussions. Gandhi offered none. He reported to the committee "with deep sorrow and deeper humiliation," that no agreement could be reached, and the failure was laid before the Conference. It was its *coup de grâce*.

The dying agonies were prolonged by the customary speeches from all sides, pessimistic, reproachful, reassuring, congratulatory. Oratory is second nature to the Indian, and he excels in it. Even the second-raters came in handsomely at the finish. Before the orgy was over one London paper called St. James's Palace "the world's greatest speech factory," not even excepting the Commons and the United States Senate. The greater maharajas asseverated their loyalty. Their relations were with the Crown: they were a unit for a progressive federal India within the empire. The Moderates pleaded with Gandhi to abandon his intransigence: he replied by calling the British attitude unbending and unbendable. He brought his deft play to a close in a final speech that for mingled defiance and disregard of historic fact is a wonder.

"When there was no British rule," he said, "when no English face was to be seen in India, we were living in comparative peace. This quarrel of Hindu and Moslem is coeval with the British advent. When the unnatural relationship between Great Britain and India is given up all Indians will live together as one man."

Imagine Lord Reading, Lord Lothian, Sir Samuel Hoare—all of them historians of sorts—listening to that! Every Moslem in the room knew the fame of Mahmud of Ghanzi, who in the eleventh century razed the holy Hindu city of Muttra and pillaged the temples of Kanauj. And of a hundred Moslem haters of Hinduism that followed him. Gandhi is no historian,

but could he, even for a moment, with the horror of Cawnpore only a few months behind him, believe this astonishing perversion of the truth?

The Congress, he said, "represents over eighty-five per cent of the population of India, the princes, the landed gentry, the educated class. It alone represents the whole of India and all the minorities."

As a matter of fact it has never represented more than sixteen per cent of the population, nor has it a shadow of right to claim it represents the people of the Native States.

"The Congress does not hold that India should achieve its liberty through negotiation," he told the assembly. "It has an alternative which is unpleasant to you. Today you have to fight the school of terrorists with your disciplined and organized terrorism, because you will be blind to the fact.

"No government may tolerate Civil Disobedience, but governments have to succumb even to these forces.

"It is too late today to resist this, and it is . . . the parting of the ways, probably. . . . I shall hope against hope . . . but if I have to put the millions of my countrymen and countrywomen and even children through a further ordeal of fire, I shall approach that with the greatest joy, and the consolation that I was doing what I felt to be right."

Here is the revolutionist with the veil of diplomacy at last wholly discarded, the terrorist unabashed.

Sastri, the indomitable, made one last plea for a constructive program. "You cannot but have seen," he said, "that there is some knowledge, some wisdom, some patriotism, even outside the ranks of the Congress you so worship! With you and your chosen associates we can fashion our constitution to great ends, and India will have cause to be truly thankful that you changed your plans and came here. . . . Dismiss Civil Disobedience from your mind and take up this work in a spirit of complete trust in us, and of faith in the British people, too."

But Gandhi sat silent, and the Prime Minister dismissed the Round Table. Perhaps MacDonald as nearly touched high



statesmanship in those few courteous but trenchant words as in any pronouncement he ever made. He stated clearly the government's conclusion that an All-India federation offered the only solution of India's constitutional program.

Then he said, "The communal deadlock stands in the way of progress. This is a problem for Indians to settle among themselves. If you cannot present us with such an agreement, His Majesty's government will be compelled to apply a provisional scheme." Committees, he added, would be set up to work in India.

Nehru's comment on the conference is interesting :

"They were a motley assembly. Few of them represented any but themselves. The scales were terribly loaded against us. . . . We watched its proceedings with amazement and ever-growing disgust. . . . The pacts and intrigues and maneuvers, the endless talk over petty issues, the deliberate shelving of all that really mattered, the playing into the hands of the big vested interests, the mutual squabbles, varied by feasting and mutual admiration. It was all jobbery—big jobs, little jobs . . . all jobs for the upper classes—the masses had no look-in. Opportunism was rampant and different groups seemed to prowl about like hungry wolves waiting for their prey—the spoils under the new constitution. . . . Was it for this that India had struggled so manfully? . . . It was political reaction that barred all progress and sheltered itself behind the communal issue. The conference was constituted so as to fail."

Gandhi's return to India was leisurely. His party, with Muriel Lester, went via Boulogne to Paris, whose Indians gave him a vociferous reception. One French journalist, transfixed by the *dhoti* and loincloth, asked him if he really wore them in London. "Why not?" he countered. "In England they wear plus-fours. Why should I not wear minus-fours?" And he added, "By the time the depression is over I am liable to be a better-dressed man than anyone on the island."

The City on the Seine in those days did not miss many tricks.

A huge crowd, which a body of International Girl Scouts valiantly tried to handle, came that night to one of its largest movie palaces—no Friends Meeting House this time—to hear him speak. The audience asked questions, which he answered, with the aid of an interpreter, in his inimitable way and in great seriousness. He seems to have simultaneously caught their fancy and awed them, which with a Paris crowd is a greater accomplishment than tightrope walking.

From Paris he went to Villeneuve for a visit to Romain Rolland, ill and in exile since the World War, who was then writing his biography of Gandhi. His sister had met the Mahatma's ship at Marseilles with Rolland's invitation to come to him. The party filled Rolland's two villas and the hotel on Lake Geneva.

Italy came next. There, though His Holiness Pius XI declined to receive him, the Vatican Galleries were opened especially for him, and Princess Maria, the King's younger daughter, brought him a basket of fruit. Mussolini received him, with Desai and Mira Ben. The restorer of the old Roman Empire, however, was less interested in his visitor's doctrine than in his diet. In one regard the interview was a triumph for the Mahatma. Benito not only came halfway down the terrifyingly long room, across which it pleased him to watch lesser beings approach The Presence, to receive them, but even accompanied them to the door when they left.

## *Chapter Twenty*

### AFTERMATH OF THE ROUND TABLE

THE collapse of the Round Table's second session had not revived Gandhi's good American press which had gone glimmering. America was beginning at last to understand the situation. In the light of London's efforts and his contempt for all real negotiation, the Congress' demand for independence, with transfer without qualification or reserve of all powers, finance, army and defense and foreign relations, immediately, with no transition period—or else!—seemed to lack a certain amount of reason. Editorial comment in New York and Washington was tinged with caution that was gall and wormwood to the Indian Nationalists.

In spite of the Mahatma's pact with Irwin they had elaborated plans during his absence to continue their work. A new wave of terrorism submerged Bengal and there was a fresh crop of assassinations of government officials. There was serious trouble, too, in the northwest with Abdul Ghaffar's Red Shirts, who were now a regular part of the Congress. After his descent upon Karachi the Khan had announced to them that the Irwin agreement was only a truce and that they must prepare themselves for a greater struggle. He had toured the Frontier Province with a regiment of his followers, with flags and drums, breaking his program once for a visit to Gandhi at Bardoli. Before long—at least while he was out of sight—his Servants of God were engaged in their old diversions, stalking the police, blocking the work of the local courts and preaching "no tax." The plan was to declare independence the first day of the New Year, three days after the Mahatma's return from London.

One must conclude that all these activities were timed and co-ordinated. That the Mahatma's arrival was to be the signal for a general rising. Nehru had perhaps expressed the sentiment of the Congress when he said in a speech at Madras shortly before the Round Table assembled: "We do not care what happens

in conferences, the question is always one of strength, and the power behind you. . . . We feel that we have something in us which will knock down the mighty British Empire!"

Gandhi's chief lieutenants were to meet him at Bombay when he landed. On the Bombay train Nehru read the news of the arrest in the North-West Province of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, with his brother Dr. Khan Sahib, and the dispersion of the Red Shirts. Presently, at a way station, he was arrested himself.

Gandhi's ship came into port two days later. He immediately called together his Congress Committee and decreed a revival of Civil Disobedience, boycott of British goods and general picketing. This time, however, the Indian Government, under Lord Willingdon, acted promptly. The Mahatma, Patel the Congress' president, and most of its leaders, were taken into custody, the organization with all its subsidiary branches was declared illegal, and its funds were seized. The rank and file of the Nationalists flew to riot, but they had been forestalled. The jails were filled and huge tent jails held the overflow.

For a time the reaction was savage and determined. Robbery of the mails, theft of arms and ammunition, attempted assassination, were frequent. In the case of the student class, the government, instead of imposing prolonged sentences, used the cane. Five hundred floggings, however, when referred to in the London Commons, did not sound well to American ears, and the practice was dropped. The women came in as wholeheartedly as in the salt agitation. Presently there were many behind the bars, even including Mira Ben and Nehru's two sisters. His aging mother was injured marching in a forbidden procession that was charged by the police.

But the movement lacked staying qualities. The peasants had not got what they had been promised and disillusion was growing. The minorities resented Gandhi's attitude toward them at the Round Table. Rivalries were lifting their heads in the Congress crowd. The party, largely the result of Nehru's socialistic propaganda, had now a Communistic wing that had no

sympathy with the Mahatma's "muddled idealism." Birla and the other mill owners were tired of putting up, and were drawing in their horns.

Some erstwhile ardent Nationalists had begun to urge that the government again confer with Gandhi, but Willingdon was not to be drawn. There would be no more pacts while Civil Disobedience continued. The Secretary of State for India backed him—no more bargaining with the Congress for co-operation. By the close of the year the agitation was petering out.

Meanwhile the committees promised by MacDonald had been working in India. Their reports were coming in to Whitehall for study. The Franchise Committee, whose chairman was Lord Lothian, favored a variation of Ambedkar's plan. The Untouchables, during the first twenty years, in addition to their normal electoral rights in the general Hindu body, were to have a limited number of special constituencies. Thus representatives chosen by themselves could speak for them in the Legislatures. This was quite different from the separate communal electorates given, for example, to the Moslems.

But it touched what is most fundamental in Gandhi, his Hinduism. He wished to better the condition of the Untouchables, always provided that they remained in the Hindu camp. If the many millions of them as a separate community learned their composite power and escaped from the fold, the Hindu majority would be imperiled. Though Ambedkar had been the Indian Government's logical choice for the Round Table, Gandhi saw his selection as a device to split the Hindu front. In the fight in London Ambedkar had defied him. Both Gandhi the Hindu and Gandhi the politician saw that the point must be made a political issue.

From the jail in Poona he sent a letter to Sir Samuel Hoare, the Secretary of State for India, in London, informing him that "in the event of the government's decision creating separate electorates for the Untouchables, I must fast unto death."

This final recourse of Gandhi's to his old weapon of the

fast, in "extortion by intimidation" which dictionaries commonly attach to the word "blackmail," to the Western mind has a touch of *opéra bouffe*. But not to the Indian. To Nehru it was a "bombshell," and he describes the news as causing "a tremendous upheaval all over the country, a magic wave of enthusiasm running through Hindu society." Discounting Nehru's superlatives, the announcement did bring to Poona a regiment of Gandhi's supporters who were in no mind to see him sacrifice himself over a side issue.

There was nothing to expect from London. MacDonald had replied to Gandhi's threat by a courteous but firm letter of regret at his action, which seemed based on a misconception of the government's "very fair and cautious" proposals. "As I understand your attitude," the Prime Minister had telegraphed, "you propose to adopt the extreme course of starving yourself to death, not in order to secure that the depressed classes should have joint electorates with other Hindus, because that is already provided, nor to maintain the unity of Hindus, which is also provided, but solely to prevent the depressed classes, who admittedly suffer from terrible disabilities today, from being able to secure a limited number of representatives of their own choosing to speak on their behalf in the Legislatures which have a dominating influence over their future." The government's decision, he said, must stand.

Gandhi's reply had been that he too must carry out his intention.

But there was Ambedkar, and the protestant group brought their guns to bear on him.

One may suspect that the American game of draw poker is not wholly unknown to Ambedkar. At any rate he is a good trader. His terms were high, but they were accepted. In return for the surrender of special constituencies, the Untouchables were to receive more than twice the number of seats in the Legislatures allotted to them by the British plan, and primaries would be provided in which they could themselves select their candidates. The compromise effected, and approved by London,

on the seventh day Gandhi broke his fast. He had forced the government's hand, but Ambedkar had forced the hand of the caste Hindus. It was a retreat from Gandhi's entrenched position at the Round Table, and the government at London went on with the drafting of its scheme for the new constitution.

The public are given to understand that Gandhi's fasts, even the short ones, cause him acute suffering. In a statement issued before beginning his six days abstention, he hopes that his "agony" may melt the hearts that distrust him, and while the fast is on he wires Nehru of "all these days of agony." But he does not shrink. Within a few months he is fasting once more, now because the people are not responding sufficiently to his efforts for the Untouchables, in particular are maintaining the ban against their access to the temples. This was to be a fast of twenty-one days. At its beginning the government released him and he finished it in the home of Lady Thackersey in Bombay.

By this time self-starving had lost its novelty for the public and his announcement of fast number eight, when his followers attacked an Orthodox Hindu demonstration against him, went almost unnoticed. Non-Co-operation had long ago gone into the discard and Civil Disobedience was far from being the weapon it had once been. In the course of the next year Gandhi called it off as a mass movement, but approved its practice by individuals. After the usual notice to the government he set out for Gujarat to rouse the peasantry to this new form of Civil Disobedience and was again arrested and returned to prison, where he began another fast, this time an unlimited one, which was to end only when the government permitted him to carry on his campaign for the Untouchables while in custody. After a few days his physical condition led the authorities to set him at liberty.

In his weakness at this time there seems to have been a retirement of the Politician and a re-emergence of the Saint. He issued a statement canceling Civil Disobedience entirely. The fault for its failure lay with the people. "The masses," he said,

"have not yet received the message of *Satyagraha*, owing to its adulteration in the process of transmission. *Satyagraha* needs to be confined to one qualified person at a time. . . . In the present circumstances only one, and that myself, should for the time being bear the responsibility of Civil Disobedience."

The wheel had now come full circle. The mass movement in which he put his faith had shrunk to a single unit. He counseled the Congress, in a broadside that must have stupefied the leaders, to "learn the art and beauty of self-denial and voluntary poverty," to preach spinning and weaving, to keep their personal conduct above reproach, to banish "Untouchability," abstain absolutely from drink and drugs, and to give their lives to "nation-building activities." This last must have done Sastri's heart good: it was what he had begged Gandhi to do on their last day together at the Round Table! At the same time the Mahatma suspended all the Congress' committees and offices, and when the organization ratified this, the government lifted the ban on the party.

This was the last straw for Nehru, who had been vibrating between spasms of impatience and submission. Bose and Patel were both ill in Europe, the other leaders were discouraged or disgruntled, and he was almost alone in his glory. He refused to abide by the decree and went off on a socialistic tangent against "vested interests" which sent still further shivers down the spines of the purse holders. He issued an appeal for a general celebration of the Congress' "Independence Day," and as a result found himself again in jail in Calcutta, under sentence of two years.

Perhaps he was further from Gandhi in spirit at this time than he has ever been, before or since. When the province of Bihar was wasted by the terrible earthquake of 1934, and the Mahatma proclaimed it heaven's punishment sent the people for the sin of Untouchability, he called the statement "staggering" and praised Tagore's indignant repudiation of the idea. Were all the hundreds of houseless and foodless people of Bihar guilty? And what of the children maimed and buried in the ruins?



Meanwhile the third and last session of the Round Table had opened in London under fair auspices. Parliament was for a responsible self-government for India. Even Churchill, who had refused to serve on the parliamentary group which examined the proposals of the committees, had no longer any doubt of that. His unreconstructed toryism had lost him the younger Conservative crowd, and with them the whole fight for the old imperial India. He had thrown out the baby with the bath water. They had deserted him *en masse* when he tried to rally them in one of the most brilliant but futile speeches he ever made. Churchill can take it, for which all of the world which is still sane may be thankful today. But he never had a worse defeat than that vote of three hundred and twenty-six plus for the government on the Indian question.

The Conference had no Congress representative now to clog the wheels, yet the problem, even after more than seven years of study and experiment, was complicated enough without Gandhi or the conflicting rivalries of the minority representatives, for in the final session only a select body of Indians took part and in a purely consultative capacity. It was probably the most difficult problem in government that has ever bedeviled any Parliament in the world. The Roman Empire had nothing to compare with it. It was somewhat as if a world conqueror today should attempt to make all Europe outside of Russia, with its various states of diverse races, languages, religions and cultures, into a federation with the League of Nations as its Legislature. For India, on a smaller scale, has the same terrifying diversity. For this reason, no less than for its enormous area, it deserves the name of "continent."

The result of the Table's long deliberations was the constitution embodied in the Government of India Act of 1935.

Its main features were similar to those of our own United States government. It had two chambers, an upper (the Council of State) and a lower (the Assembly), corresponding to our Senate and House, the former like the Senate a permanent body with a third of its members retiring every third year. It enfranchised thirty-six million of India's population inclusive of

six million women, and women were to vote and had seats allotted to them in both chambers. The provinces had an autonomy similar to our states rights, and a federal court was provided corresponding to the United States Supreme Court. A governor-general, a Briton, appointed by the British Cabinet, was the federation's head, with an advisory Council of Ministers chosen from the Legislature.

In other respects it was wonderfully made. The arrangement of the electorates and the allotment of seats in the Legislatures, both federal and provincial, was the old jigsaw puzzle. The four main components were the Native States, the Hindu majority, the Moslems and the enormous mass of the Untouchables. The princes, keeping their internal autonomy, abandoned certain of their rights and privileges to play a part in the government of the whole. The Hindus trusted in their own majority to insure them the power. The Moslems, lesser in number, knew that theirs was the power of the sword: to exclude the arbitrament of arms, they had an excess of representation in the Legislatures, a concession they had received thirty years earlier. The Untouchables had a double representation as the result of Gandhi's compromise with Ambedkar. Outside of the Moslems there were eighteen minorities, large and small, and their allotments, over and above the numerical consideration, were calculated to make unlikely any combination that would give overwhelming power to either Hindus or Moslems.

The Congress Nationalists called this a trick to insure British control, but one may see it from the British standpoint as an effort for that balance of power between the opposing factions that alone could make so complicated a machine run without dangerous friction.

Inevitably the scheme pleased nobody, least of all the older Conservative bloc in the British Parliament.

The great drawback to the Indians were the "safeguards," the powers reserved to the governor-general. These were fundamental limitations to the self-government the Congress was all out to secure. There were the holdings and rights of the

maharajas: Great Britain was bound by treaties to protect and conserve these. She could not treat them as "scraps of paper." There was the matter of foreign relations: India was one of the world's key countries, and the career and stated policies of the Congress had not convinced Great Britain of its fitness to cope with the diplomacy of the Great Powers, including some of the Far East. There was the necessity of defense and the Indian Army: with the northwest flirting with the chiefs of the tribal territories and the Afghan powder magazine just across the passes, could the army—a British creation, British officered—be turned over to a people who had no experience in modern warfare? There was the question of finance: Gandhi had given the Round Table the Congress' program of confiscation of vested interests, and Nehru had for ten years been advocating the seizure of private property and repudiation of the national debt. There was the Nationalists' demand for the right to amend their constitution: but even Canada's legislature could not do that.

So much the Indian Moderates could stomach. But there were other reservations that did not appeal to them any more than to the Nationalists. The governor-general was not obliged to take the advice of his ministers. He could veto laws of the Legislature, and it could not overrule the veto by a two-thirds majority as the American Congress can overrule the veto of the President. The powers of the provincial Legislatures were similarly limited at the option of the provincial governors. If occasion demanded, the governor-general could take over the federal Legislature's lawmaking power by proclamation. In emergency he could even suspend the constitution.

No doubt these "safeguards" would have been much less stiff but for the Congress' exultant program to follow a British withdrawal, in particular its implacable refusal to consider any period whatever of transition, while the constitutional machine was showing that it could operate without blowing up the works.

The act came into operation for the Provinces of British India in 1937. The Congress approved entering the elections, and at the close of that year controlled the Legislatures in eight

of the eleven provinces. It had issued a manifesto, however, declaring that its purpose was "not to co-operate with the act, but to combat and seek to end it." After an assurance from the Viceroy that the veto powers would be exercised only in extraordinary emergency, Congress ministries were formed, and later coalition governments, till all the provinces had become virtually self-governing. Rajagopalachari, the Madras chief, became prime minister of his province and leader of its Congress party.

Meanwhile, however, the princes had weakened. They delayed their act of accession which would start the federation, holding out for further guarantees to protect their dignities. While discussions were going on, in 1939, the plan for federation had to be suspended. Great Britain had declared war on Germany.

The federal Legislature had not yet been established. The Central Assembly functioning was the old one created twenty years before. Technically the Indian Government was still responsible to the British Government. On the day of the declaration Parliament enacted a Defence of India Ordinance, giving the Indian Government power to rule by decree, and India was declared to have entered the state of war.

## Chapter Twenty-one

### THE GOD IN THE MACHINE

COMPLETION of the New Delhi promised by the King-Emperor in 1911 had been delayed by the first World War, but the project had not been shelved for long. Work had begun again on the astounding thing soon after the Armistice.

Planned by Sir Edwin Lutyens, and with buildings designed by Sir Herbert Baker, the incredible miracle stands there now, five miles from the outer wall of the old Delhi, a structural group which is without a doubt the finest governmental nest in the world. It is like some master architect's hashish dream of the year 3000. The jungle where twenty years ago hyenas prowled and jackals screamed was leveled as flat as a billiard table, and on it, circled by the tumbled ruins of more ancient Delhis than there is record of, rises that majestic dream in stone, whose beauty should outlast anything but the Pyramids.

We had come to New Delhi for the February horse show, which is tops in the social and sporting season. It is a fortnight of polo tournaments, cricket matches, parades of crack regiments of the Indian Army and glittering state functions, with the horse show for its apex. For this orgy the city blossoms into incandescence. Viceroy and Vicereine go in state with their entourage to the show, where all the capital's society, and half of Calcutta's and Bombay's, fill the flag-draped boxes, together with maharajas and lovely Indian women in their gorgeous saris. I know no more beautiful and spirited sight.

In the social season, with officialdom holding sway, the "color line" is not as uncomfortably evident at New Delhi as it is at Bombay and Calcutta. But one has not far to go to find it. We had come from one of the hill resorts, and there, in the crowded dining room of its best residence hotel, a friend of ours, son of one of the greater maharajas who is a welcome guest at drawing rooms in London, Paris, New York and Newport, had been seated near us at a small *table à deux* opposite

an Englishman. For a week—till he could get another table—the Englishman addressed no word to the Hindu gentleman who, knowing his British bounder, ate in like silence.

This is nowhere the official attitude either in British India or the States. At the British Residencies you may see Indians and Englishmen playing tennis together any day. But in the next block there will be a club solely for British and foreigners, and three blocks away one ten times larger and finer, for Indians only. This is our old friend Inferiority Complex: the Indians insist on showing that the British have nothing on them. Throughout the country, particularly in British India, there are mixed clubs, though not many. The Willingdon Sports Club, at Bombay, named for the Viceroy Earl, is an oft-cited example. But even there, in the common dining room the whites flock together and in the card room the Indians have their own rubber.

We did not see the horse show. It had been canceled while we were en route, and I was not surprised. There was trouble in the air that one could feel like electricity before a storm. Though no one admitted it in official circles, the British were stiffening their backs for anything that might happen.

It was the students that bothered me most. The Congress was making great use of them that year, and one could tell when an outbreak was due by their restiveness, just as in Japan we could tell when an earthquake was coming by the screaming of the horses in the stable. Gandhi caps seemed twice as thick as the last time I had been in the city. They stippled every crowd, making it look in the distance like a southern field of cotton with the bolls just breaking.

I did not half like the look of things in New Delhi. Everywhere the Nationalist spoor was too perceptible. When the spellbinders got to work a new wave of rabble-rousing and sabotage was not far off. The Congress women had taken the girl students into camp now, and no street fracas seemed natural without them. One suspected they were not averse to being overpowered by a good-looking Sikh policeman. When the police

charged a crowd, which was playfully trying to burn down a telegraph station, with their *lathis*, there were always be-draggled girl students among the casualties.

Strikes had become a common nuisance to old Delhi's street traffic. On our way to luncheon at Viceroy's House our car was held up by one of them. Police were guarding the picketed entrance of a near-by school and the marchers were jeering them. A boy with his books under his arm stood hesitantly beside our car and I asked him what was happening. He said, "Some of our students have struck and the police are here to protect the ones who are standing out. I am waiting to see which side gets the best of it before I join up."

Our ride across old Delhi was like leafing the dark pages of history. Through the Kashmiri Gate, where the red-coated British handful made their desperate stand in the Mutiny. Past the wide mouth of the Chandni Chowk, Delhi's great thoroughfare of shops and smells, with its sardonic camel lines and placid, ruminating bullocks, where between its famous Clock Tower and its "Gate of Blood" the Persian butcher Nadir Shah, who carried off Jehan's Koh-i-Noor and his Peacock Throne, had sat on his platform to watch the slaughter of his thousands of Hindu captives. Past the great Jamu Musjid Mosque that was fourteen years in the building. The way was stained with the blood of the centuries.

Outside Old Delhi Gate an elbow turn brings one to the new capital. The residence sections, which the government cluster on the elevated ridge of Raisina Hill somewhat superciliously overlooks, are planned with prodigality of space, laid out in a series of concentric circles, centering on a vast double *maidan* of parks and fountains, and suggesting L'Enfant's original plan, based on Versailles, for Washington, with the Jumna River playing the part of the Potomac. Here are the bungalow dwellers, the army of Anglo-Indian subofficers and clerks, cogs in the wheels of administration, and shopkeepers. There are several up-to-date hotels including one planned for Croesuses. Tourists stay in old Delhi, five miles away as the crow flies,

where remain all the foreign religious, educational and philanthropic organizations that have done so infinitely much for the country.

In New Delhi's business portions all buildings are an uncomplaining white, of the same height and design, the sidewalks of the inner circle overhung and columned, like crescent-shaped segments of a faerie Rue de Rivoli in stucco. To the eye which brightens at variety it is very depressing.

In the best sense of the phrase it is an imperial city that Great Britain has given India. But the British hallmark is on it. It symbolizes the new India of Oxford graduate and London barrister, school-bred civil service man, Anglo-Indian bank clerk and shopkeeper, and glib student intelligentsia, all adaptations of the foreign pattern. To the peasant prodding his snarling camel along the dusty Chandni Chowk it must seem new with a terrible newness. For he belongs to the old Delhi that was ancient a thousand years before Shah Jehan. Under its domes and minarets, so near one can count them from Raisina Ridge, the old India still sleeps and wakes, works and dreams, marries, breeds and dies. And to it the New Delhi, solid as steel and stone can make it, must have some of the misty quality of a fairy tale, wonderful and beautiful, yet unreal.

The country may grow up to it someday—it is not impossible. But one wonders if the Indians, who from time immemorial have liked to live and do business rubbing elbows with one another, and whose very palaces (unless copied from Western patterns) consist of three throne rooms and three hundred cubbyholes, will ever really like it. What if for their capital they pass up the orderly encircling shops for old Delhi's familiar native maze of chattering markets and bazaars, vocal with barkers, hawkers and beggars, the narrow streets of overhanging screened balconies with mysterious movement behind their hangings, with more people walking in the roadway than on the pavements, all redolent with mingled scents of sandalwood, smoke and fresh cow-dung?

One approaches the new seat of power of the Indian Govern-



ment through a noble memorial arch erected to the Indian officers and men who gave their lives in the first World War. From this arch Kingsway, a mile and a half long and more than a thousand feet wide, which makes it the world's broadest avenue, with double rows of trees on either side interspersed with pools that reflect their living green and the burning blue of the sky, bisected by a noble statue of the King-Emperor marbled in his coronation robes, leads straight as an arrow to the gateway of Viceroy's House, caped by its gigantic dome of burnished copper that is the dominant note in the perfect symphony.

The vast palace, that sets Buckingham in the shade, is more regal than any royal residence I ever hope to see. It is flanked by the buildings of the secretariat, lifting from foundations of rhubarb stone, and at one side is the Parliament Building, a cyclorama-like structure suggesting a mammoth Colosseum. The buildings in color and design are Indian, but the general layout, the disposition of courts and colonnades, is English.

In this setting, when the machine is operating—which is to say in the five coolest months of the year—are housed the Viceroy and his staff, the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, the Viceroy's Executive Council, the Council of State and Legislative Assembly, not to mention the maharajas, who come for the social season and to attend the springtime session of the *Narendra Mandal*, the Chamber of Princes.

The Chamber was established by Royal Proclamation in 1921. It was not just a sop to the princes, whatever the disgruntled Nationalists say. They have always counted anything better for Their Highnesses as worse for themselves. Maybe they are right at that, for the princes take no stock in the freedom movement, knowing the Nationalists look on them as so many big and little devils in their prospective Eden.

More than one viceroy had tried to devise some means by which the Native States and their rulers should play a more intimate part in all India's affairs. Lord Lytton's proposal to

include some eight of them in a new consultative body called "Councilors of the Empress" (Victoria) was one of the few constructive features of his reign. The India Office did not approve the scheme, however. It said no again when Curzon twenty odd years later revised the idea. But Minto, his successor, boldly consulted the greater maharajas as to the growing sedition. Lord Hardinge, the year before World War I, called some of them to confer with him at Delhi, and Chelmsford made the conference an annual affair. A committee of the Princes helped Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, and Chelmsford prepare the draft plan of what, with the Act of 1920, became the present Chamber.

It is a good thing for the British and the princes too. Technically the princes are outside the charmed circle of party politics in British India, but they will furnish the needed counterweight to the Nationalist pretensions in a unified India along the lines of the prospective federation. The Chamber gives the maharajas a place and a time to come together to see the legislation made that cannot help but affect them in the end, and to develop their own mutual interests and policies.

In the Chamber one hundred and two princes have direct representation and another one hundred and twenty-seven are jointly represented by twelve of their rulers. The other one hundred and thirty odd petty states sink into their proper perspective as estates with governmental guarantees, where the landlord collects rents as taxes. The Viceroy is the president of the Chamber, which of course has no executive power.

For liaison New Delhi has a Political Department, which handles the relations between the States and the government. There has been some backing and filling there, but its attitude seems to have less of the watchdog and more of the guide, counselor and friend than one might expect.

The Chamber is well attended. Of the greater maharajas only Hyderabad and Mysore have never joined it, with a few of the smaller ones, such as Udaiper, whose ruler, though first of the Rajput princes, I believe has never been even in New

Delhi, let alone in Europe. The plan of the capital provides sites for the members' town palaces. A number of them are already built, including the Nizam of Hyderabad's and the Gaekwar of Baroda's. Their owners arrive in great state, not on elephants, but in special trains or limousines, and in gorgeous clothes. It takes two *trains de luxe* to bring the Nizam with the two hundred ladies of his *zenana*. They get less kick out of it than his unmarried daughters, who are not even held to the *purdah* and go to New Delhi parties and to the races.

The princes' week in New Delhi is their official annual call on the Viceroy. In return he visits the capitals of those of highest rank at least once during his term of office. That is his time to see the splendid processions and the wild-elephant hunts, to shoot his tiger and be garlanded and sprayed with attar of roses, and (no doubt for the only time in his life) to chew the ceremonial betel nut. A viceroy's life is no sinecure.

The maharajas take themselves with praiseworthy seriousness. When they are not debating the plan for federation in executive session (with the doors as closely tyled as the House of Representatives in Washington when it discusses a Senate bill to reduce salaries) they are apt to be arguing some point of etiquette, for which they are super-sticklers, such as whether, when a senior prince visits London, the King-Emperor should not have the Buckingham Palace Guard turned out to salute him.

To appreciate the expanse of New Delhi's governmental framework one needs a chart and guide, and a whole day at least, to say nothing of the gasoline. It carries a sensation of enormous spread-outness that congeals one's first enthusiasm. An impression of illimitable straight thoroughfares sweeping to some far horizon, of curving roads surfaced with rolled brick dust, flat hard ribbons of rose-colored Chinese lacquer, unrolling here and there into tree-shaded courts.

It is odd how such an architect and landscapist genius as Lutyens, given all outdoors to play about in, becomes obsessed with the idea of distance. You do not just step across from Viceroy's House to the secretariats: you call your motor. The

amount of overhead it takes to run the place must be appalling. Going from one department to another is a sizable walk by galleries and corridors splendidly labyrinthine. And the time it takes to get about! One feels like an ant crawling in the skeleton of a mastodon. Someday a viceroy will hear, perhaps, of the famous Washington subway that whisks motorless senators and congressmen from the Capitol to their office buildings, but that is in the womb of the future, with the destiny of New Delhi's governmental *mise en scène* itself.

For that destiny, one feels, is not necessarily determined. When the Indians achieve the full freedom they long for, will the government they frame elect to occupy that stupendous mechanism? Or will they choose the characteristic old Indian beehive, with its cells deep in the earth, where one can work enough to get by in some comfort, even in the sweltering seven months that the atrocious heat of the plains makes a hell for the Englishman, which he escapes only by moving, bag and baggage, to Simla?

It might happen, you know, and New Delhi might be added to the list whose brightest stars are the abandoned Hill Castle of Amber on its craggy peak above Jaipur, and the exquisite forsaken pile of Fatehpur Sikri.

Yet heaven forbid that that should be! In the end one is vanquished by the sheer daring beauty of it. And amid its loveliness, one bridles to hear it damned to its face by an Indian tongue—as I had, the day before, at a tea given my wife and me in one of the charming inner courts of the Parliament Building which holds the Assembly. It is a place of clipped shrubs and velvet grass, with a gracious fountain and beds running over with purple pansies, where we had drunk gimlets and nibbled sandwiches and little cakes with a group of Nationalists under the blue sky, the men in cool white and the women in their gauzy native dress.

For there are women in the Assembly now, a comparatively new thing. Before 1917 there was no All-India women's organization, and it was only in 1926 that women were made

eligible for Legislatures. The feminist movement that had languished for years was stepped up after the close of World War I, and even passed through a militant phase—not to the extent of smashing plate-glass windows with brickbats wrapped in fur boas, as in the Emmeline Pankhurst campaign in London, yet enough to flutter all the *zenana* doves—though it really “took” only with the very upper-crust, educated women like Mrs. Naidu. Margaret Sanger, the apostle of birth control, lectured in India a few years ago and even established more than forty clinics. These things, however, belong to the intelligentsia, who have thrown away all the old inhibitions and whose up-to-date daughters have even taken up “petting.”

The Assembly—a semicircular chamber looking so much like a replica of our own Senate that it would hardly have surprised me to see Senator Barclay or Senator Byrd drift in from the cloakroom—had lacked interest on the day of our tea. The Nationalist members almost to a man, and all the women, had walked out as a protest against something or other, a popular practice called by Europeans in New Delhi the “sulks,” which must be irritating to the serious-minded Indian members who are outside the Congress pale. They were “pouting,” as one of the vanishing ladies expressed it. For they were all at the tea, still in a state of tumultuous indignation.

I had been descanting on the splendor of Viceroy's House, when a fiery young Nationalist, whose fighting qualities and amiability made me treasure his friendship, jumped down my throat. A “grandiose nightmare” he called it bleakly, “to be paid for by taxes on India's poor that would support the indigent of a famined province for generations.” What use had they, the Indians, whose taste was simple, for all that grandeur? They neither liked nor wanted the sickening pageantry the British were foisting on them and making them turn their pockets inside out to maintain.

He was a Malaviya, a nephew of the octogenarian conservative, India's Grand Old Man. I knew his uncle for a lover of beauty, and I doubted whether he would go so far. As a matter

of fact I suspected the diatribe was more than half camouflage to hide an unwilling admiration of something that India owes to the British. The Indian with an atom of love for art and beauty in his soul *must* admire it, as he admires the Taj Mahal. Though that in inspiration is Persian-Moslem and one can like it and live.

Indian taste simple! I reminded my friend that Old India's splendor had been proverbial for a thousand years. Modern India had been bred in pageantry. It was in the marrow of its bones. I was glad that none of the rest seconded his criticism.

After the tea we had taken in the cattle show. The Viceroy and the Vicereine were there. Lord Linlithgow towered in the judges' ring, ranking a prize bull. His interest in bettering the quality of the Indian breed is responsible for the annual show, which has put the Indian milch cow on the world map. Lady Linlithgow's special interest is in the foundation of tuberculosis clinics, to which she devotes much time and labor. She is the founder and president of India's Tuberculosis Association.

From the cattle show we had driven for a thousand miles or so along the perfect tree-lined roads to Princes Place, to see the latest of the maharajas' palaces to be completed. There is no need to brace oneself to find an avenue of stupefying structures such as the Gaekwar's palace at Baroda, that suggests a handsome block in Istanbul. Not a bit of it. All are in perfect keeping, exhaling the modishness of the best country houses of our Long Island nabobs, yet with a tricky cupola, or screened balcony, or belvedere, that whispers of the East.

My friend Malaviya did not approve of them, I knew. He did not approve of the princes, or anything that smacked of them, either in New Delhi or in their own capitals. If any of them stay after the British are gone, he would have them shoeing horses or something.

For my part I would defend the maharajas with my blood. For when they vanish there will disappear from India something that can never be replaced. Something that throughout the ages has been the repository of its people's art and folk lore

and passion for color and beauty. That is the pageantry my friend thought India had no further use for. Except for Viceroy's House and the imperial durbars in New Delhi it is dead in British India, and it survives in them only because the princes will have it. In their States it lives on, instinct with history and tradition.

The Western world would be brighter for more of pageantry than its conclaves of Knights Templar and Nobles of the Mystic Shrine. England has done well to preserve some of hers. London would not be London if there were no more summer garden parties on Buckingham's lawn with the gay marquees and the bobbing parasols; no more files of bouqueted debutantes and stately stomached dowagers making their curtsies in the Throne Room; no changing of the crimson-coated Guard in Whitehall; no ruffed Beefeaters with their halberds and bonnets; no red-and-gold state coaches with prinked-out horses going to the opening of Parliament; no ranks of peers in scarlet and ermine—all the vanished pomps covered with the snows of yesteryear. The thought is an evil dream!

And I would mourn the passing of India's princes, with the gorgeous durbars and rainbowed processional, the martial trumpets and priestly conch shells, the majestic brocaded elephants with painted trunks and carmined toenails, *úmpha-úmpha-ing* through the pattering crowds spelled by the swaying gilded *howdahs* and the musical cries of the *mahouts*. It is not America, and we Americans are not sorry for that, but let us pray that pageantry may cling on in India, its most ancient home, as it has clung in England, to remind its people that ceremony and symbolism still have value in the world, to hold together fraying social values it would be poorer without!

The viceregal protocol is strict, as is natural in a land where ruling princes abound and where Viceroy and Vicereine must uphold the prestige of the King-Emperor and the empire. On our arrival at Viceroy's House a military aide squired us to a tall-windowed drawing room giving vistas of the gardens, where

we took our places with the other guests, precisely as one does at Buckingham. The Maharaja of Bhavnagar, with his aide, was the last to appear, a pleasant-faced, roly-poly young man in a fawn-colored gold-buttoned coat and a most satisfying turban of crisp blue organdy, with a streamer end.

Presently Lord and Lady Linlithgow entered and passed along our line, the ladies curtsying and the men kissing Her Excellency's hand. Their greeting was a combination of formality and friendliness that was very winning. When the double doors of the dining room opened they showed a long table that looked so invitingly English after some of our culinary experiences up and down the peninsula that I almost burst into tears. An Indian servant, turbaned and barefooted, wearing a knee-long waisted coat with a red-and-gold lozenge on its breast, stood behind each waiting chair.

The Marquess is six feet four, broad-shouldered and straight. He has an aggressive Roosevelt jaw and quiet, kindly eyes. He too suffered from infantile paralysis when he was seventeen, made the same courageous fight and won the same victory as our own President. And he, too, is a dynamo for work—his aide told me that his exacting day began at ten and ended often long after midnight.

The Marchioness is as handsome as marchionesses ought to be but sometimes are not, and my wife later confided to me that her hair-do was the *dernier cri*.

Again in the drawing room, over the coffee, the Viceroy talked with me alone of the situation. During the past month I had been in many sections of the country, for the steadily increasing complications of Indian politics had fascinated me, and I felt, as everyone else did, that as the struggle with Nazism developed, things would probably be worse in India before they could be better. What he said helped my understanding and gave me a still more vivid conception of the enormous difficulties that hedge viceregaldom in this decade.

When we said good-by he detailed an aide-de-camp to show us the house and gardens, while he went back to his study. A



remark of his that long ago went the rounds was that the place was so big (it has three hundred and forty rooms and a little under a mile and half of corridors) that he knew the way only between his study and his bedroom. To suggest a mammoth scooter might be *lèse-majesté*, but the innovation should add to the life expectation of a viceroy.

The main feature of the colossal building, after the ballroom and state drawing rooms with panels that are the work of famous Indian painters, is the circular Durbar Hall, with dome supported by groups of columns of yellow marble and a princely dais. A ceremonial investiture was to be held the next week; I would like to have seen it. The main garden, the scene of brilliant fêtes throughout the season, has wide tessellated walks and fountains, between flower beds patterned like Persian rugs. Lady Linlithgow herself has carried out the color schemes. On a lower level is a garden that is purely Indian, combined of Hindu and Moslem styles, the whole walled by masses of shrubbery.

I wish I might quote something of what the Viceroy said to me, but there is properly a rigid rule as to viceregal as well as royal utterances. His last words, however, I can repeat without indiscretion: "Our anchor," he said, "must be patience. We must forget everything before that."

I have heard long sermons that said less.

## Chapter Twenty-Two

### FAMILY PORTRAIT

**A**FTER his singular suspension of the Congress' activities in 1935, Gandhi had retired to an *ashram* he had established at Wardha, in the heart of central India. There he had been living, surrounded by his peculiar entourage which counted some twenty devotees, male and female, to whom he is "Bapuji" (*bapu*, father, and *ji* a reverential grace note which means nothing in particular but is not to be omitted) and his wife "Ba" [mother].

Wardha is as interesting as any one of a hundred county sections on the naked sun-bleached plain of our Nebraska Dust Bowl; and in the dry season as dusty and far hotter. It is a long way from anywhere. And from the station, where one staggers panting and disheveled from the train, the *ashram* is still another handful of dusty miles. The little settlement, a scattering of gray mud huts which turn to maroon in the rainy season, with red tile roofs, Gandhi has named Sevagram. His own bungalow, perhaps from the bamboo grills in the wall, has a Japanese-y look. On the stucco side wall, molded in relief, are two spinning wheels rampant, supporting a harp-shaped window. Near it is the mud hut Lord Lothian occupied when he visited him during a trip to India in 1937 to study the operation of the new franchise. A few sprangling trees lend a touch of green to a dun landscape.

The small drab retreat, whose upkeep is paid by Gandhi's long-pursed, mill-owning backers who finance the Congress, was chosen by Mira Ben, the one-time Madeleine Slade, his English disciple. It was her idea that symbolically, as the voice of India, his residence should be at its geographical center, and Wardha is as nearly as may be that. Off the main line and reached only by a dust-eating battle with heat, distance, flies and all the other discomforts of a journey in central India, it has been a place of pilgrimage, not only to Indians but to foreigners.

The English tourist goes there as he visits Mrs. Besant's Theosophical institute at Madras, where Signora Montessori now teaches her famous system of kindergarten, and the American traveler as he searches out the room back of the newspaper office at Lahore where the young Kipling scribbled his "Barrack-Room Ballads." It has a spare hut or two, earthen-floored and bamboo-roofed, for the entertainment of favored guests, and with Gandhi in residence, there have been few days when they were not needed. People have visited the place literally from every country in the world.

At Sevagram, till his internment last summer, Gandhi has received the Nationalist leaders, and wrapped in his mantle of unofficial anonymity, has dictated the action of the servile Congress. There, flunkeyed by his coterie of disciples, and basking in the atmosphere of ritualistic devotion, he has invited the Inner Voice which the realistic Nehru interprets as instinct and the irreverent call a hunch, but which to the peasant is the whisper of the Divine. The spot has been the Mecca of the foreign correspondents but with the Mahatma in enforced seclusion it is so no longer. A recent letter I received from an American member of the guild closed with a gloomy quatrain, not uninspired by a favorite classic:

Alas for the *ashram* of Wardha,  
Abode of the *outré* and odd,  
Where the goats used to gambol on Gandhi,  
And Gandhi-ji gambled on God!

Gandhi himself has been photographed and described in print, even to the nickel watch swinging on a chain from his loincloth, till he is as familiar to the American public as Mickey Mouse. Yet all the pictures miss an intangible something that one painter has caught—Oswald Birley's portrait looks more like him than any photograph I have ever seen.

In my mental picture he had retained something of the Gandhi of 1914, and my first sight of him in India, bent and withered as a decrepit Zadkiel, with shaven head roughened by

a fuzzy bristle of white hair, corrugated forehead and deep cheek furrows, shocked me. He is thin to the point of attenuation. He looks like the pictures of the Indian famine sufferers in the old missionary pamphlets. And the painful impression is heightened by his semi-nakedness, which shows the hollows between the ribs and the bowed spindle legs that seem to need the staff he walks with to help support the child-sized body. When he sits the effect is even worse. He might have been the model for the famous Peking figurine in ceramic of the Buddha in his legendary incarnation as a starving beggar.

His intimates call him affectionately "the Little Man," and the phrase is inevitable at first sight, although while he is a bit undersized, he is no dwarf. But his wizened body when he sits and his bowed back when he walks give the impression of smallness and weakness. He weighs, normally, ninety-eight pounds.

Nothing could be more deceptive, however, than his appearance. He may look as if a stiff wind would blow him away, but in reality he is as tough as a pine knot. He must have an incredible vitality. He has lived, for certainly thirty years, on a good deal less sleep in the twenty-four hours than the ordinary man allows himself. And he is a glutton for work, as his corps of secretaries, whom he tires out every day, will tell you. Time and again he has said that he will "fool them all" and live to see Indian independence.

The extra-large spectacles and the beaklike nose add to the effect of an owlish, good-natured pixie. Any first impression of weirdness, however, yields at contact to liking. Everyone I have known who has met Gandhi bears the same testimony. Saint, politician, mystic, charlatan, arch saboteur—whatever your considered opinion of him may have been—he wins you with a certain charm he radiates as naturally as he breathes. One presumes that it is the Saint that appears at such times. Perhaps it is the Politician that his enemies see. For he has his full share. Though even they must find it hard to quarrel with him. None of his collaborators in South Africa could do so success-

fully, though his cantankerous ways often tried them. Some inner sweetness of the man always won them again. Like Theodore Roosevelt and James A. Farley, he never forgets a face once seen or a name once heard.

It is hard to classify\* his *ashram* family. They have been of all sorts and of various nationalities. They have come and gone, some staying long periods. Kasturbai, his child wife, is a wrinkled old woman, with white hair, sunken mouth and lined forehead, but with black eyes still bright and with a sweetness in her seamed face that reminds one of the Chinese poem:

Mock not the withered skin of the dried plum.  
Once on its bloom-branch in blushing, 'twas wept.

When she was twenty-nine he wrote of her, "She has considered herself blessed in following my footsteps." From her gentle, placid face he might as truly have written that today. They spent their fiftieth wedding anniversary together in the Poona jail.

Mira Ben has perhaps the longest record. She is almost as much a feature as Kasturbai and speaks with the voice of authority. She is his first line of defense against annoyance of all kinds.

The oddest member of the group of late years was a Japanese Buddhist monk named Kaishu, Indianized to "Keshav." With his narrow eyes and olive skin, his chanted prayers and his little snakeskin drum, he was a prime favorite. Even Mira Ben liked him. But the day after Pearl Harbor the unfeeling British police descended on Sevagram and carried him off to a concentration camp to the *ashram's* sorrow. Always after that the morning and evening worship was begun with Keshav's chant, in the holy syllables, "Hail to the Buddha, of the true faith!" a sacred memory to Gandhi. Keshav, to quote the *Harijan*, was "an ideal inmate who took part in every activity with zest." He had been most discreet, till on one occasion he forgot himself in a bitter complaint, made to an outside ear, of Nehru's denunciation of Japan's Chinese adventure, and the boil-over had

undone him. The police seized his books and papers for examination. One wonders what they found.

The *ashram* routine, between Gandhi's jail intervals, is work, walk and worship. Everybody gets up with the lark at four o'clock and would go to bed with the chickens if there were any. The day begins with a season of prayer, at which, except on his weekly day of silence, which usually is Monday, he personally officiates. This is a general "must." A walk for all hands follows, and it is no saunter, for Gandhi's pipestem legs carry him over the ground, generally with a woman's sustaining arm on either side, in a quick patter that sometimes leaves the bare-footed cavalcade panting.

The household chores are waiting when they get back, and everyone takes a hand at them. If you are a guest you may find yourself answering the telephone, pulling the *punka* (an electric fan is too much of a machine for Gandhi), milking the goats or emptying the slops. Gandhi meanwhile goes through his mountainous mail and digests the newspapers while Kasturbai fans him.

Luncheon is very sketchy. His diet has remained the simple regimen he adopted in South Africa: fruit, vegetables, nuts, sometimes a little wheaten bread, curds, and goat's milk *ad libitum*. As often as not he takes no luncheon at all. Then comes the invariable Indian siesta, with the women fussing over their spiritual master with mud packs, wet-towel compresses and massage, which he accepts royally as his right. Mira Ben is the expert in these treatments.

Of all Gandhi's peculiarities nothing so irks the British as these innocent ministrations. There is no doubt the Indians get a pleasurable reaction from a mental picture of their number one holy man having his legs rubbed by the daughter of a British admiral and a one-time Bombay society beauty. But it touches the exposed nerve of white supremacy. It seems quite likely that side of the matter has never occurred to Gandhi, who is perhaps as near an approach to a dehumanized human being as the world has yet produced. One may be quite sure that it

has nothing to do with the high blood pressure from which he sometimes suffers.

After the siesta he gets down to work with his secretaries, dictating in his high-pitched, querulous voice his editorials for the *Harijan*, which often occupy half the publication's space, and carrying on a voluminous world-wide correspondence that would give Wendell Willkie the jitters. In his South African period he began an exchange of letters with Tolstoy that continued up to the Count's death. He wrote frequently in later years to Romain Rolland, to Tagore in spite of their differences, and to Lord Halifax and Lord Lothian. He writes to anyone who writes to him if the correspondent's letter interests him.

From siesta to evening the members of the *ashram* fill the time spinning and weaving the *khaddar* cloth which makes the clothes all of them wear. This is counted of first importance. As a guest you are absolved from this, but the inmates have to report how many reels of thread they have spun and how many inches of cloth they have woven. And if their quotas lack there is trouble. For Gandhi will have no malingering, and he can be as hard as nails when he wants to be.

The evening meal is a period of relaxation. All sit in rows on the floor of the veranda beside the kitchen, tailor fashion, with Gandhi at the upper end. At the sound of a little gong a blessing is chanted, Gandhi leading in his thin reedy voice.

During his work hours he may be short and sharp, even positively snappish. One attempts to argue with him at his peril. He is as rigid a ruler as any sultan who ever hectorred it over a harem. But the evening registers a fade-out, when the slave driver dims and vanishes, and in his place appears another Gandhi, an emaciated, monkish little wisp of a creature who suggests less the stern and uncompromising Congress dictator than a superannuated but roguish Robin Goodfellow. Even the smile on his faun face is different. It is not toothless now, for he wears a plate for eating the nuts.

He does not mind in the least being a kind of raree-show.

It is plain that he enjoys it. And in return for being looked at he looks at his guests. He asks them naive questions, and the naiveté is not David Harum's but old Li Hung Chang's, who, knowing that Americans are aware that it is polite in China to ask a lady's age, delighted blandly to inquire the age of the dowagers at Washington dinner parties.

Gandhi used to get a good deal of prankish amusement in this way. Sometimes you may suspect a sly barb of satire, and once in a while you may be dead sure he is laughing at you maliciously down inside of him. Then you suddenly know there is no malice whatever there, but just a sense of fun that in one mood is as natural to him as grim and ruthless domination is in another.

He likes to hear other people laugh and to laugh himself, to listen to a droll story and to tell one. As a boy his first tutor was an Irishman, and in consequence his English has the smallest trace of the brogue, which sounds odd in a Hindu. He interlards the dreariest conversation with characteristic sayings—as when, referring to Katharine Mayo's *Mother India*, he calls it “a drain inspector's report,” adding that “India has sewers, but it is not a sewer.” He said of his Day of Silence that he adopted it after Bishop Frederick Fisher came to see him one Monday morning. “He kept talking all day and I couldn't get a word in edgewise. I enjoyed it so much I decided to adopt it as a habit.” And there is his Puckish remark, “If we Indians would only spit in unison, we could make a puddle big enough to drown three hundred thousand Englishmen in.”

His humor is unaffected and bubbles out of him as naturally as steam from a teakettle. It is a frame of mind. He loves to talk nonsense and I have a suspicion that he would fall hard for *Alice in Wonderland*.

After the evening meal there is another walk and another prayer service, generally with singing. If there are foreign guests present they are apt to be asked to sing *Lead, Kindly Light*, which is one of his favorites. This rounds out the *ashram* day. All that remains is his forty-minute bath, which he takes



*à la japonaise*, at a temperature of slightly over a hundred. He sleeps outdoors on a cot, of late years six or seven hours. He does not use a mosquito bar, but puts kerosene oil on his face and hands instead. He falls instantly asleep.

This is the real Sevagram, which *Independent India*, the organ of the radical People's Democratic Party, calls "the charmed circle of Wardha, with its monotonous hypnotism shrouding a scene where nothing but a profane game of party power-politics is going on, in an atmosphere utterly out of time with contemporary history and the objective stirrings of the Indian people."

At the *ashram*, after his sensational abdication, the Saint had had a long inning. Gandhi had approved entering the elections and had advised Congress members to accept offices under the new regime. There had been a welcome period of public peace. Before the elections Nehru had called the Conservative candidates "a curious assortment of careerists, communalists, renegades, and people who had staunchly supported the government in its policy of repression," but when the ministries began their work he made handsome acknowledgment. "With their coming," he wrote, "a new life coursed through the whole country . . . political prisoners were released and a larger measure of civil liberty, such as had not been known previously, was established."

Meanwhile the Nazi holocaust, with Hitler's armies sweeping across Europe, had sent its fiery glare across Asia. The trampled peoples had remembered the meek, hater of violence. A company of foreign delegates to a World Christian Convention in south India—American and European, African and Chinese, including one Japanese—had come to solicit a spiritual message from the Saint of Wardha. The venerable Paderewski had cabled, begging him to enlist the sympathy of Indians for his unhappy Poland.

Gandhi had long ago said, "God has chosen me to bring India freedom." And the chosen of heaven rated its protection. When

a bomb was thrown on his car at Poona, he had said, "No one can kill me. God Almighty is my bodyguard." And after that he had ridden in a bullock cart so that would-be assassins could get at him more easily. En route to London for the Round Table he had been told that special arrangements had been made for his protection there, and he had said, "If anybody wants my poor life he may have it. It is all I have to give in the cause of India's independence. God is my only protector." He would have been a far better risk for the London insurance companies than the average Englishman in Bombay or Calcutta!

It was in these quiet months now at Sevagram, perhaps, that he first began to see himself as a world figure—as Woodrow Wilson saw himself in that strange hectic week in Washington in 1919, between his two visits to Europe after the Armistice—confounding Hitler's field marshals by the magic of aroused conscience. Very soon he was to write, "Who knows that I shall not be the instrument for bringing about peace, not only between Britain and India, but between the warring nations of the earth?"

Once born, the concept continually recurs: "I am confident that God has made me the instrument of showing a better way. . . . The part I would like to take is the part of peacemaker. . . . I am aspiring after a new order of things that will astonish the world. . . . The next step for me God will make clear when the time for it comes."

This is schizophrenia's final and invariable phase, and the student of mental abnormality will have noted in his career all the typical badges of the progressive disorder: the "persecution complex" centered on the British Government, the object of a resurgent dislike long repressed and thrust down into the subconscious; the belief in himself as exceptional and unique, repository of cosmic, world-shaking ideas; the sense of a swelling power and inner voices; and at last the conviction of a divine dedication, whose logical development is the militant stage which countenances increasingly fanatic violence to gain his God-directed ends.

His letter to Hitler, on the eve of the outbreak, was Gandhi's opening gambit: "You are the one person in the world who can prevent a war which may reduce humanity to the savage state. Must you pay that price for an object, however worthy it may appear to you to be? Will you listen to the appeal of one who has deliberately shunned the method of war not without considerable success? Anyway I anticipate your forgiveness if I have erred in writing to you." Hitler did not reply that, though he himself should preach non-violence, his followers, judging by the example of India, would continue in the path of the war. He did not grant his forgiveness. He did not reply at all.

It was not the Saint, however, who would have received Hitler's answer, if he had taken time out from his murderous orgy to write one. The usurper Politician had returned. We can be sure of that from Gandhi's new attack of the fasts, which seized him at this time. The ruler of Rajkot, one of the tiny states of Kathiawar, in whose chief town he had hung out his youthful law shingle, was not making good on a promised scheme of constitutional reform, and Gandhi had announced another "fast unto death." But the Politician would not have it. Gandhi had turned from God and the Inner Voice to the Viceroy and the mails. He had appealed to Lord Linlithgow to intervene, the Prince had agreed to arbitration, the fast was broken on the eleventh day, and the Politician was free.

The Viceroy's declaration that India was at war was the trumpet call, and Gandhi sprang to the saddle again to the Congress' delight. For years he had not even been a member of that body, but that had made no difference. Who was its president had signified nothing. One distinguished objector had called the form of its government a "dictatorship by proxy." This could not happen in any country but India, but then, neither could Gandhi. He is a condition that is superior to all theories.

With one voice—*his* voice—the Congress protested that "the Indian people have no quarrel with the German people, or the

Japanese people, or any other people. They do not look forward to the victory of one people over another." To Gandhi it was "equally bad if England and France fall, or come out victorious over a Germany ruined and humbled." Through his mouth-piece, the *Harijan*, he said, "If God endowed me with full powers . . . I would at once ask the English to lay down arms, take pride in being called 'Little Englanders,' and defy all the totalitarians in the world to do their worst. Englishmen will then die unresistingly and go down to history as heroes of non-violence."

The Congress followed these pronouncements, classifying with Wilson's famous "Peace without Victory," with an invitation to the British Government "to declare in unequivocal terms its war aims in regard to democracy and imperialism and their application to India."

This brought from Lord Linlithgow, in the form of a White Paper, the statement, hackneyed by this time, that Britain's aim was Indian self-government and "free and equal partnership" in the British Commonwealth, with dominion status. He proposed the formation of a war advisory board and the addition of representative Indians to his Executive Council, if the Congress and the Moslem League "could so adjust their differences as to make this practicable."

Jinnah's League had declared for co-operation in the war, and the Viceroy's proposal pleased the Moslems, but it infuriated Gandhi, whose claim was that the Congress represented both Moslems and Hindus. The Congress ministries were ordered to resign *en masse*. Gandhi has denied that they withdrew on instruction, but there is the Congress resolution for anyone to read.

It was easy for him to eliminate the only influence in the Congress that threatened successful opposition. This was the fiery Subhash Bose, who was its president elect. He had been a rebel all along, an out-and-out champion of mass Civil Disobedience, which Gandhi had dropped. He had not yet taken his seat, and by an artifice familiar to politics, Gandhi inconti-

nently "purged" him. He put through a resolution that Bose should choose for his committee only those approved by himself. This political horsewoggle left Bose as helpless as a June bug turned on its back. He had to resign. After being thus sent down the river he declared war on Gandhi, calling his doctrine "medieval mysticism" and his methods insipid and mealy-mouthed.

Gandhi was clearing the way for a sensational coup, which would put him in the forefront of the leftists. He had long ago cooked his goose with the Moderates—the Extremist wing was all that remained if he was to have real power. The "dominion status" alone stood in his way. Up to the implementation of the new Act he had openly approved it. At the time of the elections he had written Henry Polak that, provided the right to secede were granted, he would accept it. They were hard words to swallow, just as the phrase had popped up again, a grinning Jack-in-the-box, in the Viceroy's latest statement. But it had to be done. He announced that "experience since gained and maturer reflection" had led him to change his mind. He now knew that dominion status, "even of the Westminster variety," could not suit India!

This opened the door for the Congress Committee, sitting at Patna, to act. Nehru drafted its Resolution, the first tremor of the earthquake that was to rumble across India and agitate violently the political seismograph in London. It declared Great Britain's action in taking India into the war without reference to its people, and the exploitation of its resources in the war, "an affront which no self-respecting and freedom-loving people can tolerate." Great Britain was carrying on the war for imperialistic ends based on the exploitation of the peoples of India and other countries. The Congress would not help with men, money or materials. No status short of complete independence would be accepted. The Indian people must shape their own constitution through a constituent assembly elected by adult suffrage. The difficulties in regard to the Native States was of British creation: neither their rulers nor foreign vested interests

could stand in the way. The withdrawal of the ministries would be followed by Civil Disobedience, to which the Congress would "unhesitatingly resort."

It was a momentous step. The Congress, gathering at Ramgarh, was to act on this resolution. Gandhi's bomb was set to burst.

## Chapter Twenty-Three

### HIGH WATER AT RAMGARH

IN the history of the Congress, as of the whole unhappy Indian question, the session at Ramgarh in 1940, so far as interest and significance went, was the high-water mark.

I had come up through the blistering heat and the dancing dust whorls of the plains from southern India, where I had delivered a convocation address at one of the universities, to see this crucial Congress. It was bound to adopt the resolution, and there would be the devil to pay. For the World War was on, and Great Britain had to win it, for India's sake as well as her own. I saw the Congress' inevitable decision as the beginning of the end, at least for the duration, of Gandhi and Gandhi-ism.

There would be contrast in it for me, for at the university I had spent ten days in a scholastic atmosphere where the Congress was at a discount. With a few exceptions the faculty pandits took little stock in its agitations and listened puzzledly from the background to the distant excitement. I had seen only a few *khaddar* caps during my stay. The wearer of one had attempted to inject politics into an impromptu speech at a learned symposium on "Hindu-Islamic Analogies," and the venerable provost had squelched his ardor in a rebuke, couched in Oxford English, that had been roundly applauded.

On the last night of my journey it had been almost impossible to sleep, for the only compartment available had been nearly full and the traveling Indian loves nothing better than to sit up all night smoking and chattering. I dozed off only once, to be waked by one of my fellow passengers, who roused me in a station to caution me about my bags. "Keep an eye on them," he warned. "I am sorry to say we are not civilized yet when it comes to an easy thing like a valise. I lost two of mine on one of my trips. They were stolen right under my chin."

I replied that in that respect I had found all countries, not excepting my own, painfully alike. I told him I was Congress-

bound, and he advised me to wire for a car to the Rangarh junction, which I did. He had attended two or three of the sessions when they came near enough to Madras, his home.

He was not a member of the party and was not enthusiastic about the situation. He asked me if I knew the Indian village life, and I answered that I had seen a good deal of it.

"Then you understand what our trouble is," he said. "We Indians all know that the British are going to get out finally, and I shall be glad when they do, but it is not the time yet. The Congress *wallahs* never tell the people all of it. We had almost complete provincial autonomy when it threw it away by making the ministries resign and forced the old autocratic government back on the provinces. Is there any common sense in that? We are just where we started from three years ago."

I knew from private sources that it was Nehru, with the help of Patel, who had put across—with Gandhi's O.K.—the withdrawal of the ministries. They thought Great Britain would soon be in a position where it would have to give the Congress all it demanded. Of the whole Committee Mrs. Naidu alone had stood out, a lone minority of one, for helping the British.

"You don't think well of the Patna idea of an elected constituent assembly to frame the constitution?" I asked.

He turned out his hands. "The Viceroy, I am told, wrote to Gandhi and Jinnah before the elections, asking them to join hands in a settlement. Of course there was a deadlock. And now the Congress Committee comes back with that—an assembly elected by vote of all the people of India! The Mahatma says he wants it done by a universal adult franchise, 'so that arithmetic can't be cheated.' Doesn't he know that only nine per cent of the population can read and write?"

My car was waiting for me all right and I reached Rangarh well before noon next day. The Congress had chosen an admirable site for its camp, which nestled in a valley on the bank of the Damodar River, at the foot of a thickly wooded mountain range. It must have accommodated at least fifty thousand people.



The leaders' camp was at the further end of the enclosure, with a huge kiosk in the center for the meetings of the Committee. It was planned to hold five thousand people, aside from the central kiosk, which was walled and roofed over with *hugla* grass and looked cool and shady in contrast to the fiery heat outside. Its roof was decorated with stripes of tricolored cotton and little tricolored flags waved everywhere in the baking breeze. It is in the Committee that the real work is done. The Congress is there only to say Amen. And of course the Committee exists only to carry out Gandhi's orders.

All Nationalist propagandists use the word "India" when they mean the Congress, and when they talk about the "Voice of the Congress" it is the voice of Gandhi they really mean. Take him away and the Congress has no voice at all—or rather it has a multiple voice, that without his baton would be a jarring discord, like an oratorio sung with no conductor.

It has no real coherence. Unless it is held together it would split up into vociferous followings, heading in a dozen directions at once. That is why, in spite of his repeated withdrawals and retirements and resignations, it has always welcomed Gandhi back. It can do nothing without him. Under it all is the great subswell of the people, the vast submerged, ignorant, inarticulate mass of the Indian villages. His saintship has made him its idol. In that sense alone he speaks for India.

After I had disposed of my car in a parking space, I wandered about taking it all in. It was like an enormous county fair, side booths and all, and was jam-packed with jostling crowds, talking and laughing and arguing and chewing betel nut with great enjoyment. Over the hubbub a loud speaker was broadcasting a warning that a gang of professional pickpockets from the north were on hand and cautioning the people to keep a sharp lookout.

The crowd was of all sorts and conditions, rich man, poor man, beggar man and (according to the loud speaker) thief. It was a sea of white Gandhi caps, with a sprinkling of Punjabi turbans, bareheaded Bengali and an occasional Parsee shiny,

patent-leathery hat. Presently I ran across D——, an English correspondent of a Bombay paper whom I knew, and we prowled together through the streets and alleys of half-tents, half-huts, that housed the delegates. Army as they were, they were only a drop in the bucket, for they had all brought their families and relations. And in addition the surrounding countryside for many miles around had poured in its droves of people, out to see the excitement. Most of these had no tents. Presumably they slept on the ground, as thousands do in the hot weather, in the *maidans* and parks of all the big cities of India. Heaven knew it was warm enough here to sleep in the altogether. The sweat was pouring off me, and the sun drew my chest like a mustard plaster.

I felt like the American girl at the Uffizi Gallery in Florence whom I overheard say to another, "Now you go down this corridor, and I'll go down that one, and we'll do this whole thing in a jiffy." If I could only have worn a loincloth, as Gandhi did! The Volunteers were fussing about underfoot everywhere, telling delegates where to find their places and directing strangers. Thirty thousand of them had been thrown out of their jobs when Civil Disobedience was called off, and the session meant food and shelter for a while at least. The girl Volunteers wore their saffron-colored saris.

The place was still buzzing over the murder in London of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the one-time Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab. I had had the news the day I left the south. With General Dyer he had been the storm center of the Amritsar affair, twenty years ago. The assassin, who had been an infant when it happened, was a young Sikh who had cut his hair and who called himself Ram Muhammed Singh. The Congress Committee had issued a statement expressing regret for the "unfortunate act of violence by a person said to be an Indian," and denying that it had any political significance. But it was well enough known that Singh was a marked man to the police of Amritsar, had been jailed during the Civil Disobedience dis-

orders, and was a close associate of Bhagat Singh, whose hanging caused the dreadful massacre of '31 at Cawnpore.

Gandhi had arrived three days before, traveling third class, had been met by Mrs. Naidu and the leader of the women Volunteers, and after being garlanded and marked on the forehead with the word "tilak,"—the ancient Hindu ceremony in which the caste-mark is formally placed on the brow—had pattered in with a guard of honor. Prasad, the retiring president, had handed over to Abul Kalam Azad, the president-elect, who is one of the few Nationalist Moslems of the party, and Prasad had then moved the Patna resolution of defiance to England.

D—— told me Nehru's speech had been an hour long, not in his best style, and showed that he had the "wobbles." That in one breath he had said, "Our cup of anger is full and the time for action has come," and in the next had declared that to demand immediate Civil Disobedience was foolish.

Ever since Amritsar, Nehru has been torn between two loyalties. He hates haggling and temperamentally he belongs with the Bose bloc, but he cannot abandon Gandhi. The little Mahatma has his hooks in too deep. He will have to come in all the way with him in the end, and he knows it.

The resolution passed the Committee in the afternoon like greased lightning, and I had no doubt it would go over just as big with the Congress tomorrow.

Neither Gandhi nor Nehru was in evidence today, nor was Mrs. Naidu, but we saw Vallabhbhai Patel, the party's hatchet man, and Bajaj, the latter looking smooth and prosperous, as who wouldn't with all his millions? Evidently Gandhi had made his peace with the fleshpots. I looked for Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the old stalwart who battered his way into the Karachi Congress with his Red Shirts, but did not see him. My friend pointed out some of the other leaders, whom I did not know.

He had secured a copy of a letter written by one of the Congress' former presidents, who was too ill to attend the conclave, to the president-elect. He wrote "on bended knees" that he was "prayerfully of the opinion that it is injurious both to India

and to England to ask for absolute independence, and that it would be dangerous to our country." I never learned whether it was read to the Congress, as the writer had obviously intended, but it would have made no difference to Gandhi anyway.

The feature of the day was something decidedly not on the program. It was a stunt of Gandhi's old enemy, Bose. I will say he had imagination, and like Gandhi a sense of the dramatic. In past Congresses he had had a sizable tent to rant his Extremists in, but this time he had worked on a large scale. He had built a monstrous enclosure, a mile from the Congress site, called the All-India Anti-Compromise Congress. While we were wondering what was causing a sudden commotion, past our gates, from the station three miles away, came a long and splendid procession with banners and music. Bose, the unapproachable, led it, perched on a wonderfully decorated farmer's cart drawn by two white bullocks. As a sensation it was a triumph and almost stampeded the Congress crowd.

This was too good to miss. My reporter friend and I bolted to get my car, which became the tail of the procession.

The opposition show was bigger than ours. It would have held anything up to a hundred thousand people. Its walls bore pictures of Phagat Singh, and it had arched lath and plaster gates named "Fight for Freedom Gate," "Martyrs Gate" (for the group of youthful rebels of British government officers, whose names are household words to the Nationalists), "1857 Arch" (the date of the Mutiny), "Jallianawala Bagh Gate" (the place of the Amritsar fusillade) and a "Lenin Gate" blazoned with the Communist hammer and sickle and lotus flowers. I hoped Nehru, who preaches a socialist economy that he thinks might be "most suitably Soviet combined with real democracy," had seen the last.

For Nehru has kept his flair for Russia, "that great and fascinating unfolding of a new order," as he calls it, "a new civilization, the most promising feature of our dismal age." His dream is an India that is a cluster of soviets, which he thinks would solve the communal difficulty and open the way for the socialistic system which is his vital creed. But he knows

that Gandhi has welded the Congress to Nationalism and that the Nationalist game has to be played out. However, he keeps his anchor out to windward just in case.

Bose's g'garble spoof was intended to split the Congress and Gandhi's following, but it had as much chance to do that as a rail fence has to stop an army tank. However, he got a tremendous ovation from the leftist mob gathered to welcome him, with loud-speakers blaring the national anthem. We did not wait to hear his speech.

When we got back the crowd of the Congress was definitely larger, for trains were coming every hour as at a football game, and troops of new arrivals were thronging every entrance. The story was going about that a trainload, reaching the junction and finding that the last train to the Congress had no room for them, did *Satyagraha* in the approved style. Some hundreds of them lay down on the track before the cowcatcher and refused to move, till the railway authorities had to rustle up a special train for them.

The heat was sickening. The air danced with it. Except for the Klondike, where sometimes we used to get a hundred and thirty, I think I have never felt it so unendurably hot. There was not enough breeze to float a cobweb. Neither of us had the spirit to claw his way into the Committee enclosure. Only miscellaneous business was on and D----- had learned that Gandhi would not speak till eight. We found some buns and bottles of lukewarm soda and lazed in the shade, panting like lizards, while D----- amused himself by making rhymes. I saw some of them long afterward in his paper:

Mr. Gandhi  
Isn't much of a dandhi.

And he's a whole lot thinner  
Even than Jimmi.

Let us sing a lalalibblai  
To Executioner Vallalibblai.

"But you can't rhyme like aidi,"  
Says Sarojini Naidu.

Which shows what the Indian heat can do to a respectable citizen.

We wormed our way into the enclosure just as Gandhi, amid what the vernaculars next day were to style an "unparalleled ovation," arrived walking with his staff, and with a stern look on his face paced up the gangway between double rows of clicking cameras, to take his seat in the center of the platform, while the thousands sitting on their haunches, packed as tight as sardines, surged to their feet with a roar of "*Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai!*" that shook the air. We two were at one side, in a space marked "Visitors," squatting with the rest. Long residence in Japan had taught me to sit on my heels without laming myself for life, but poor D—— was less happy.

Gandhi spoke in Hindustani. I have not spoken it since I was a child, but what we learn in childhood never gets quite away. It is only covered up. And during the past months in India I had found words and phrases coming back. I could get a fair bit of what he said. The loud-speaker made each syllable clear in the pin-drop silence of that enormous crowd.

He began by saying that he had never even dreamt that he was a mahatma, and that he considered Englishmen to be his friends. He took some sly digs at Bose's pretentions (Bose himself was not present) that made a lot of laughter and brought him to his real subject, which was that he, Gandhi, was running the show. He never leaves his audience in any doubt as to that.

The conditions he laid down, he warned, must be fulfilled. There would be no compromise in principle, but till then he would not take the responsibility of starting *Satyagraha*. He promised that Civil Disobedience would be begun in a month, if he had assured himself there would be non-violence. Perhaps the legal transfer of power would have to wait the end of the war. But pending that, India must be treated as a free nation.

His method was the Irish "a kick and a lick," and he alternately soft-soaped and threatened, now appealing and now cowing his audience with dire prophesies of failure. He got a unanimous vote of complete confidence in his leadership.

Amazing man! His talk gives the impression of being perfectly spontaneous and unstudied, but the notes of the short speech, which was unrelieved by the smallest gesture, as entered in my diary, show it a masterpiece of build-up and climax. Yet he has no gift of oratory whatever. He seems to despise it. His voice is as uninteresting as a metronome, sharp, too, and even unpleasant, and his appearance on a high platform is grotesque. His bowed and skinny legs are pitiful and his big lenses make his eyes look unnaturally bulging. A bald head and oversized ears complete a picture that is anything but prepossessing.

Yet when he talks somehow one forgets all this. He has that something the French call *je ne sais quoi* that one cannot define. This is heightened by an air of perfect detachment. He is not talking to you, but to something beyond and bigger than his audience—to history perhaps. You can take it or leave it, it makes no difference to him. While you listen you forget the dictator of political wiles and evasions, of cunning shifts and artifices. Later, when you recall him, you try in vain to fit the two pictures together.

D—— and I spent half the soggy night wrangling. He had found somewhat disreputable digs in a frowsy bungalow, for which his paper no doubt paid a stupendous sum and which boasted an extra cot, and for hours on end we lay watching the chuck-chuck lizards spiral over the walls and wondering if there were scorpions in the thatch, while we argued about the emaciated little man in the loincloth, with the gnarled brown feet and the missing teeth. No two foreigners ever agree about Gandhi, and we did not, except perhaps for the last sleepy observation I remember from the other cot:

"I say—," muttered D——, "I'm beginning to sort of like the old goat. . . ."

Next day was the real opening of the Congress as distinct from the Committee. The proceedings began at three o'clock, just when the sun was hottest. But there were doings before that.

The weirdest was when Bose's anti-Gandhi procession, led by himself in the farmer's cart drawn by the white bullocks, marched through the camp, yelling the Indian equivalent of "Down with Compromise!" The vigilant Volunteers swarmed in and it looked like a free fight for all, but calmer counsel prevailed.

Bose mounted a platform just opposite the main tent and made a speech amid much waving of red flags and tricolor standards. "Does this Congress realize," he wanted to know, "that back of this smoke screen of cheap slogans and chicken-hearted leaders a compromise is being arranged? What has it offered the British government? Nothing but words, WORDS, WORDS! What we want is deeds!"

It was plain that he had plenty of supporters in the Congress lot, too, but they were not ready to split. They were waiting for the word of Gandhi.

At three the entrances to the great marquee were packed with people gathered to cheer the leaders as they came in to take their seats on the high platform. It almost needed a shoe-horn to get through. D—— had a pass to a wired-off enclosure for the press, but it was in a poor situation and he chose to take his chance with the mere "visitors" like myself.

We had just wangled a possible squatting-place, when I noted that the sun was gone and it had suddenly grown almost comfortably cool. A black huddle of cloud was looming up above the ridge that rimmed the west and south. Clearly it was going to rain. We were inside by that time, and there was no getting out, not in that crowd. Someone began singing the "*Bande Mataram*" that the Congress had made the national anthem. Sung and shouted by those many thousands of voices, the volume of sound was almost unbelievable: if there had been any roof it would have raised it.

Some routine business was gone through with, to which no one paid much attention, and at length Azad, the president, light-skinned and massive, with his distinguished Arab-looking face, piercing jade-hard eyes and short gray pointed beard came in



followed by the new committee, loudly cheered. It included all the old stagers: Nehru as a matter of course, stockier and less quick of movement than when I had seen him last; bull-necked old Sardar Patel; Prasad the modest, as universally loved as Patel is hated; Bajaj, the rupee-stacker; the huge and amiable-looking Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the Peshawar tribal chief known as "the Frontier Gandhi"; and last but by no means least, the plump and comely Mrs. Naidu.

All of them, like most of the assemblage, wore the *khaddar* cap and shawl, which are admirable extinguishers of every spark of individuality in dress. One Indian apologist operating in America writes that "the homespun shawl for market place and drawing room is like the Roman toga. It gives a gentleman a courtly dignity in the tropics." Courtly dignity? I ask you! But Mrs. Naidu rose superior even to her robe. By some miracle she looked smart in it.

They were barely in their places before the raindrops began, as big as bullets. The audience, still on their feet, began to flock toward the gates as the first wicked jag of lightning slashed through the cloud bank. Azad in his big resounding voice said something indistinguishable, and after him Prasad and Nehru in quick succession came forward, but their words were utterly lost in crashes of thunder. Everyone was interested only in getting out. Later we learned that the loud speaker mechanism had gone bad.

It was a *saucée qui pent* in a cloudburst. The whole sky was coming down in buckets, and a driving wind was tearing everything apart. The camp that had cost two hundred and fifty thousand rupees to build was going to pieces before our eyes. The thin mats that had covered the ground were flying in the air like shreds of torn balloons. In no time the ground, where twenty thousand people had been squatting, was a quagmire of chocolate slush, and the drainage ditch that ran through the middle of the camp was knee deep. The downfall broke the record for fifteen years in that part of Bihar.

Bose, it appeared, had nothing on the Congress. He had just

begun his own presidential address when the blow caught him, collapsing his big tent and injuring a number of persons. It must have been the only bright spot to the Congress leaders.

Bose was a pathetic waste of good material. He had a brilliant mind fit for much greater things than giving orders to the terrorist groups in Bombay and seeing that they listened to the Berlin short-wave broadcasts. But he lacked balance. This year of Ramgarh was hardly out before he burned his bridges and, in a determination to free Asia at any cost from the sinister grip of the West, fled to Berlin. Recently he has been broadcasting from Tokyo, appealing to Indians throughout the Far East to aid the Axis.

As D—— and I floundered across the dragged camp, the thunder was booming like bass drums and the lightning was throwing into black relief the darkened and flooded huts. He went off to his bungalow and I set out to my car to see how it had fared. I found it ankle deep in the flood but dry enough inside, and I crawled into it shivering—for the wind had turned chill—to wait till the worst was over, wetter than any number of drowned rats, and feeling like the Terrible-Tempered Mr. Bang.

At nine o'clock, at the bungalow, I got a printed copy of Azad's speech which was to be taken as read. The proceedings, it had been announced, were to be repeated, weather permitting, next morning.

The speech was the conventional one. The Congress would go forward in "the uncompromising fight with British imperialism." When India, without its consent or even knowledge, had been made a belligerent country, it had asked Britain what its position would be. It had not asked that the complete independence it demanded be conferred now, but only for an assurance that it would come immediately after the war's conclusion. Meanwhile it wanted tangible acts on Britain's part that would enable India to be for all practical purposes an independent country and have full freedom to decide its own part in the war. (One could guess what that would be!)

The Congress had made it clear that its future constitution would be framed not by it alone but by representatives of all political parties and religious groups. (That it could have had—it *did* have—at the Round Table!)

Minority differences could be referred to arbitration. (Whose arbitration?)

India could not endure the prospect of Nazism, but it was even more tired of British imperialism. It could not wish it to triumph. (But British defeat *meant* Nazism. How many Indians did the Congress think would prefer a victorious Germany? After what had happened and was happening now to the peoples of Europe?)

India's way lay in the opposite direction. (If that did not mean toward Nazism, what *did* it mean?)

All that was left now to India was *Satyagraha*!

To the Nationalist every speech, every conclusion, leads to that goal. To Gandhi and to a handful of the more spiritual of his followers it may mean "soul force," pure and undefiled. But to Azad? To Nehru? To any one of that Committee? While they were using "soul force," they knew perfectly well the mob they led would be using clubs.

I was neither Englishman nor Indian, but it was not a national matter. It looked to me as if the whole globe might be in the war before it was over. The Middle East certainly. If it spread beyond that, India had a fat chance of keeping out! How could the "Congress *wallahs*"—how could Gandhi—fail to see that?

It might be America's business, too, before so very long. The world had shrunk. India was no longer far away from anywhere. What with the radio and the Quiz Kids, we talked in New York of it as casually as of Portugal or Argentina. We even knew the names of some of its poets and scholars. Gandhi was no stranger to us. Our papers kept us as well informed of his doings as the Britisher, who (when the Nazi bombs let him) read his London *Times* as religiously as he took his morning tub and his breakfast kipper. We had come to see that the world

is so knit together that what affects one part affects all, and that India is a key country, the stepping-stone between Europe and the Far East. As such, what India does—what the Congress would do next day—might very well become of great moment to every American.

I found myself tingling with a kind of impotent impatience. Europe was aflame, the sparks were flying in India's direction, but the politicians would not help man the fire engine!

The rain lasted all night and let up only at daybreak. In the clammy white morning mist the camp was a Dismal Swamp and the Committee's enclosure a lagoon. There was not a dry spot where the plenary session, still to come, could be held. Word had come that it was to be that morning, on the higher ground, in front of the enclosure, where the Congress' tall flag-staff stood, with its elevated veranda running around it. There the people gathered, in their thousands, unkempt and mudlarkish but happy. There must have been thirty or forty thousand of them when Azad mounted to the veranda with Gandhi and the other leaders.

Nehru led off in form, with the loud-speaker working finely. He talked mainly of the resolution. It had declared anew that full independence was India's goal. The government was not to be Hindu, or Moslem, or Christian. It would be a government for the whole country, and it would not be the top few who would rule, but the masses.

Eloquence is a much abused word, but Nehru has it. His extempore periods have the classic perfection that marked those Woodrow Wilson turned out under the lamp-lade in his study, yet every sentence is as alive as fire. He has a trick of closing a bit of pathos with a slashing turn of rhetoric that makes the hearer start like a horse at a whiplash flicked across his neck. Gandhi never had eloquence of any kind. His effects are gained without it. He sways a multitude as much through the eye as the ear. I have seen peasants sweat while they listened to Nehru.

I had seen an example of this in Srinagar, the Kashmir capital, where I happened to be on a day he arrived there fresh

from his eighth term in jail. He came by the river way in a stately barge, with a growing flock of crimson-curtained skiffs trailing it like the tail of a comet, and the riverside houses were filled with cheering men, women and children. Twenty thousand people were as near as they could get to the landing steps to welcome him. It was a great sight to see the forest of right arms go into the air and hear the bellowing "*Nehru Ki Jai!*" [Up, Nehru!] like the roar of a hundred lions.

That was not enthusiasm for the Congress, however, for which the Kashmiri have no great love, or for independence, which few of them understand. But his family is of Kashmir origin and the town is proud of Jawaharlal for the fame he has gained.

I heard only one of his speeches there, which was enough, for I have about as much Kashmiri as I have Choctaw, but it was worth seeing for its effect upon the people. It had force and expletive, combined with a perfect delivery. Some part of it, I fear, was wasted, for he drifted into a panegyric of socialism—one of his besetting sins—and the Kashmiri know as little of that as they do of independence. Anúp, my bearer, was much impressed. He got enough of it to make him a full-fledged Nationalist on the spot, but the word "socialism" was beyond him. He asked me afterward what it meant, and I explained at some length his new idol's theory. I thought I did it rather well, but he still looked puzzled. "*Sahib,*" he said finally, "me master, you master, who feed the horse?"

At the impromptu session at the Ramgarh flagstaff Gandhi followed Nehru with a speech an hour long, very Gandhian and self-congratulatory. Everything, from the early unanimous vote of confidence, had gone his way.

The more he saw of *Satyagraha*, he said, the more he admired its beauty. He recalled his work in South Africa, and how he had out-manuevered Muntz. "Remember," he told them, "this is the same Gandhi talking to you here." (Volleys of cheers and *khaddar* caps in the air like a graduation day at Annapolis.) "We all know we are slaves in our own country . . . that we will

have to fight for our freedom. I can join you in applauding speakers who have demanded the immediate launching of Civil Disobedience. But I will not be hustled into it. If you do not obey me you are not good soldiers and I will not be your general. Your hands are not tied—you can choose another. But if you choose me you must obey my instructions. This must be clear or I shall be ruined, and if I am ruined the country will be ruined with me. I want no one with me who does not believe in the spinning wheel. Truth and *Ahimsa* are the essence of *Satyagraha* and the spinning wheel is their symbol."

According to the official record the resolution was passed by an avalanche of votes, and the Committee was authorized to resume mass-Civil Disobedience, presumably when Gandhi so ordered. With a final roar of the "*Bande Mataram*" the Congress closed, and the Mahatma left the camp, a waste of tattered banners, crumbling plaster arches, collapsed tents and mud, for his Wardha *ashram*.

It remained for Bose, unvanquished by the ruination of his opposition Congress, to contribute a closing tableau. At midnight he and his colleagues burned two atrocious effigies labeled "Dominion Status" and "Compromise Talk" on the banks of the Damodar, opposite the wreck of the Congress camp, and threw the ashes into the river.

## Chapter Twenty-four

### PAKISTAN

THIS was to be a big show year. The Ramgarh Congress had hardly dispersed when another sensation agitated the turbid current of Indian politics. It was Jinnah, Gandhi's most artful enemy, who furnished it this time.

When he abandoned the Congress in 1920 most of the League's leaders had followed him out. Except for Dr. Ansari and Abul Kalam Azad, there were few notable Moslems left in its ranks.

He had by no means forsaken politics, but he played strictly the Moslem game. He had steered clear of the Non-Co-operation agitation, even rustivating for some years in England to avoid taking part in it. Once again in India, he gave up his foreign dress, as Motilal Nehru had done. His clothes no longer came from Saville Row. He dressed as an Indian Moslem, ate like one, talked like one—in the Persianized Urdu, not English. He got rid of his old priggishness and fraternized with the hoi polloi. He became to all outward appearance the perfect Moslem reactionary. The older Moslem conservatives approved of him. He had been a natural choice for the Round Table, where, with the Aga Khan, he had opposed Gandhi and had pledged Moslem adherence to the new constitution and the federation.

But the result of the succeeding elections had not been satisfactory from the Moslem standpoint. In the administration of the new Congress (Hindu) ministries the communal tension had grown tighter. The Moslem minorities resented their treatment. The Congress government, they asserted, had counted the Congress flag as a national flag. It had made Moslem school children salute Gandhi's portrait and sing the "*Bande Mataram*" anthem, which contained anti-Islam sentiments. It had given the best civil service places to Hindus. The League having declared for war aid to Great Britain, the Moslems resented the

Congress' obstructionist attitude. The old bitterness was back, stronger than ever.

Out of this concentrated gall had emerged a new conception. First to voice it had been one Rajmat Ali, a postgraduate student at Cambridge. When he was five a fakir had cast his horoscope and declared him marked for great things, and the prophecy had clung to his mind. He had bided his time, and his hour had struck with the new constitution, which he had repudiated in a famous pronouncement entitled "Now or Never." It was championed by no less a man than Sir Muhammed Iqbal, the poet and mystic of sacred memory who has been called the Father of the Moslem Renaissance, one of the most distinguished of Islam's modern writers. Today he is revered almost as a messiah.

Ali's declaration gave the Moslems the word "*Pakistan*." It asserted in plain terms their right to a separate national existence. It condemned the Round Table's scheme of an All-India federation, and declared for a Moslem federation outside of and distinct from it.

The word "*Pakistan*" is fancifully said to be formed, on the principle of the American "Socony," of the initial letters of the chief Moslem provinces, Punjab, Afghanistan (standing for the North-West Frontier Province), Kashmir and Sind. But its true derivation is simpler. It is *pak* (the Pushtu "sacred") and *stan* (the Persian "country"). It means the Sacred (Moslem) Land.

The seed fell on fruitful ground. The grandiose idea appealed to the mass of Moslems who had embraced the nationalistic policy but were alive to the fear of Hindu domination. It was just what Jinnah needed.

For him, clear-headed politician that he is, the coming movement had cast its shadow before, and he had been preparing to take advantage of it. In 1934, when the Aga Khan had made him permanent chief of the League, he had lost no time in reading out of it such Moslems as elected to remain in the Congress, on the ground of "divided loyalty." The sheep thus separated from the goats, he had announced himself as the paladin



of Moslem nationalism against the Hindu majority. It was his subsequent campaign with the dynamic tocsin "Islam in Danger" that had given him his appellation of "Quaid-in Azam" [Great Chief].

Another era of Civil Disobedience, to which the Ramgarh action pointed, would unite Hindu and Moslem in a joint effort against the government and the whole dreary rigmarole would begin again. There was nothing in that for the Moslems. With Jinnah, as with most capable generals, the best defense is attack. The League's annual conference was to open at Lahore the day after the Congress closed. The opportunity was made for him.

I missed his Lahore spectacle, but D—— went, and later he gave me a full account.

The "Great Chief" had arrived in style, in a special train covered with landing, to be met by the Moslem Prime Minister of the Punjab, Captain the Honorable Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, who died last year, his leading supporter, backed by something like fifty thousand people. The crowd, D—— said with the chaste understatement of the top-hole reporter, bulged the station like an accordion. Sir Sikander with his high office had the reputation of a distinguished soldier and a banker. His long suit was economics. He attended London University and was the first Indian to command a company in action in World War I. The Prime Minister of Bengal, the Honorable Fa Iqul Haq, a one time prop of the Congress, arrived two days after him.

The giant enclosure was as big as the Congress' at Ramgarh, seating sixty thousand persons. The League color is green and the huge flag floating over the entrance made it look very Irish. All the speakers flayed the new India Act and the federation. "The constitution," Haq declared, "must be reframed with Moslem approval. And it must concede independence to the areas in the northwest and the east, wherein Moslems are in the majority."

It looked as if the League was going to be quite as bareheaded as the Congress. A series of independent States cut out of British India was unthinkable.

Jinnah spoke last, and carried everything before him. It was

*Pakistan* he demanded. Not independent States, but free States in an independent federation. Islam in India was no minority. It was by right a nation! He spoke, curiously enough, in English, and his speech created extraordinary enthusiasm. D—— said he had never seen anything like it.

Jinnah's oratory is very different from Nehru's; it has no classicism about it, no fine phrasing, no more eloquence than Gandhi's, but he has a voice like an organ and with as many stops. He is by turns colloquial, even to the use of dialect, mocking and castigating and occasionally back-slapping. When he finished the conference passed a thundering resolution declaring the federation of the India Act "unworkable and totally unsuited and unacceptable to Moslem India." It denied "absolutely" that India could ever be a united country. It must be divided into Moslem and non-Moslem States.

Here was the perfect counterblast to Ramgarh. The two together left the Round Table's federation gasping.

Jinnah's field day went to show how the Nationalist idea had bifurcated. There were two Nationalist movements now instead of one. It effectually disposed of Gandhi's claim at the Round Table, that the Congress rightly represented the whole mass of population. With the exception of the North-West Frontier Province, Abdul Ghaffar Khan's bailiwick, where the Moslem majority is so great that the communal problem virtually is non-existent, the Moslems disowned the Congress once and for all. As for the communal situation, the gulf had broadened and deepened. Hindu-Moslem disunity was at an all-time high.

Jinnah did not put *Pakistan* over without a hitch. Many of the Moslem leaders hung back. Sir Sikander Hyat Khan and Fazlul Huq dissented promptly. They even left the League, to return to the fold, however, two years later, when Jinnah's leadership had become so unquestioned that it was that or practical ostracism.

But the rank and file were for Jinnah. The Moslems of the Punjab and the United Provinces have a militant proletarian organization similar to Abdul Ghaffar's "Red Shirts", whose

members call themselves Khaksars [Dusty Ones], wear a semi-military uniform and carry a spade as emblem, useful on occasion as weapon as well as badge. Their leader is a Pathán chief known to them as "Allama Mashriqi" [Scholar of the East], a Cambridge man who was once assistant secretary to the Indian Government. To show their colors they rioted in Lahore, with thirty odd fatalities, including two policemen, and threatened to send thirty thousand *Janbazan* [Suicide Troops] to "ring Sir Sikander's bed with corpses." The government had to quell their enthusiasm by force, disband their organization and imprison the Allama.

The Congress jibbered with rage that the Moslems, those outland guests whom for centuries Mother India had cherished in her bosom, should dare to propose her partition.

Malaviya and the *Mahasabha* cried "Vivisection!" Vinayak Savarkar, the young Hindu terrorist who in 1911 had been shipped to the Andaman Islands for life, had been released after long agitation in the Indian press with the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. A writer, poet and platform speaker of the first rank, he had grown in the public estimation and was now a coworker with Malaviya, and the *Mahasabha's* president. Its orthodox Hindus counted all India as Hindustan, the land of the Hindus, and the suggestion of partition outraged them. "Our Moslem brethren," cried Savarkar, "must accept an undivided India as inevitable!" Provincial *Mahasabha* conferences passed resolutions declaring the Viceroy's dominion-status declaration a step toward independence.

Other leaders outside the Congress discreetly remained on the fence, notably Ambedkar, whose Untouchables stood to gain nothing either way. It seemed to him better to win the war before deciding to carve up India like a turkey.

The effect of Jinnah's *Pakistan* move did not particularly worsen the situation, which was bad enough, except to show the increased explosiveness of the communal feeling. But the Ramgarh resolution was a shock that was felt from end to end of British India. The feeling among the English had been

that Gandhi would not go so far, and his apparent intention to let loose another fury of Civil Disobedience shook people's hearts. I had gone from Ramgarh to Bombay, the city against which the spearhead of revolt had always been directed, and a stealthy fear walked the streets there.

There was reason enough for fear, even of another ghastly rising like that of the Mutiny, when the bodies of British dead, men, women and children, floated down the rivers to the crocodiles. The Moplah tragedy and the rising at Cawnpore had been fierce and unexpected. Gandhi had time and again lost his grip on the masses. It was real rebellion that had been plotted at Amritsar. A company of the Indian Army had refused to fire on the mob in Peshawar. Would it remain loyal if there should be a general rising? And the British troops were so pitifully few!

With a great European war just getting into its stride, there was no hope that divisions could be sent out from home. Churchill's policy of the iron hand was at a discount. Also the *Pakistan* furore had left the Moslems in combative mood. If the Hindus started anything they would come in. Though Bombay's life went on as usual, dread was stirring under the surface.

I had many friends among British officers, and I knew from the talk at the yacht club there was great anxiety. Castlements were being enlarged in all the chief cities and larger towns, communications were being overhauled. The Mutiny was eighty years ago but the British did not intend to be caught napping again.

European husbands were forbidding their wives and daughters to go to the bazaars, and everyone had a story of the Italian variety of the insolence Los Angelinos observed in the Japanese fruit markets in the months after Pearl Harbor.

Sometimes the effrontery was brazenly open. One afternoon, while I was tea-ing at a lady's house in Lucknow, a Hindu peddler opened his pack at the veranda to show the guests his laces. Our hostess told him, "No, we want nothing today." He

snapped his pack shut, saying coolly, "When we rule here, you will buy from me!" and stalked off. A teacher at one of the mission hostels had the same experience with a Moslem hawker who, when she refused him, flung back over his shoulder, "You will buy of me when the British are gone!"

During a previous era of disturbance the sister of Bishop Badley of the Methodist Mission in old Delhi was standing at her gate one evening when an Englishman whom she knew galloped up and startled her by throwing himself from his horse and swinging her to the saddle. It was a practice rescue. He was the one appointed to carry her to a prearranged place of safety in case of serious trouble. These tactics were being revived now. Every white woman in the city, I was told, including Americans, had a particular man told off for this purpose.

At Bareilly an empty building once used as a jail had had its interior freshly whitewashed and its cells furnished with cots and bedding. Each cot was tagged with the name of a prospective occupant. The basement was stocked with provisions and bottled water for a four months siege. In the larger stations central buildings were being converted into citadels to receive foreign women and children. A missionary in Lahore told me that the week before, quite in fun, she had said to her cook, "Gopal, you have been with me fifteen years. If there should be a revolution you wouldn't let me be hurt, would you?" And he had replied, quite seriously, "Oh, no, *Memsahib*. I would do it so quickly you would not even know it!"

It was hard to be cheerful that spring, while the Nazis swept into Denmark and Norway, and Belgium and Holland went down under the savage onslaught. When England's expeditionary army fought with the embattled forces of the French. In May, with the thermometer at a hundred and ten and the United Provinces fit only for salamanders, my wife and I fled to Rawalpindi, minded for a Kashmir houseboat and the snow-cooled breeze from the Himalayas.

It was a blazing morning when we left the plains, but after a few hours of bumping and slithering over washouts and moun-

tain bridges, we were at a comfortable altitude. The passes are all thrilling in spots, especially just after the rainy season when a loosened boulder may come crashing down without warning. An Englishman's car had been caught by one the preceding night and carried over the edge. We had to make a detour around the landslide, and down below, a thousand feet or more, looking like Liliputians, we could see the road menders scrambling about searching for what was left of his outfit.

We were following the trail the old Mogul emperors used to take. They traveled regardless, as Genghiz Khan did when the Gobi winds began and he left Karakoram for the Blue Hills. Shah Jehan's summer outing must have been a gorgeous stunt. It was not only the Lion of God and his harem and personal entourage who went. It was not just his court. It was all the Delhi official world and his wife. If he left behind sons or nephews, nobles of high rank, or officers of his military, there might be a *coup d'état* that would force him to fight his way back to his capital. He had wiped out his own brothers by dagger and bowstring to seize the throne himself (one of his sons was destined to wrest it from him in his old age and imprison him for life), and he was taking no chances.

Old Moslem historians delight in picturing these stupendous royal caravans. A thousand laborers went a month ahead to clear the road with mattocks and pickaxes, and droves of supply camels and hand-fed milch cows followed them. Before the cortège went road waterers, perfume sprinklers, a keeper of the hour glass who called the hours, and a camel laden with white silk cloths to cover any dead animal or human corpse from the royal sight. Its van and right and left wings were each guarded by eight thousand cavalry captained by royal princes.

Shah Jehan himself rode on a golden throne surrounded by footmen carrying silver staves, and ringed by thirteen elephants bearing green standards, the color of the Prophet. Nine horses of state, caparisoned, came next, and after them the Queen, Muntaz-i-Mahal, the Night-Scented Tuberose, the Gazelle-

Eyed, the Greatly Desired One, borne by the hugest of the royal elephants, on a dome-roofed throne of enameled gold.

A drove of elephants laden with tents and nets for tiger hunting, two hundred camels staggering with silver coin and a hundred with gold, parks of artillery, a mammoth car carrying the royal barge for river-crossing, musicians with pipes and cymbals, trumpets and kettledrums, eunuchs, concubines, engineers, tradesmen, craftsmen, servants and an army of camp followers, male and female—these brought up the rear. The chosen site was a populous city, a swollen ambulatory Capital, walled with scarlet cloth.

Those were the good old days before the coming of the British, which the Nationalists count the era of India's greatest glory, when wealth and waste were the rulers' prerogatives, and the sweating peasants paid. And the Congress Nationalists gird at the government for moving its New Delhi chancery machine to Simla for the hot months! They call it a wicked and unjustifiable expense!

Seven-bridged Srinagar, Kashmir's capital, straddles the Jhelum River, nestling in the heart of the loveliest garden valley of the world. It is eighty by twenty-five miles of sheer beauty, rimmed by snow peaks tinted in the summer sunset with unimaginable hues of rose madder, violet and madreperl. Through it the river winds in a glittering serpentine and its broad Lake Dal stretches its shimmering expanse, lined on one side by the stately *chenar* trees which the Mogul conquerors brought as seedlings "to console their homesick hearts" for their old domains, far away beyond the Hindu Kush. They are now tree giants, almost too big to believe.

At the club on the lake, the vale's unearthly beauty was all around us, but the spear of world pain and terror pierced it, and the war dogged our steps. Its fury came to us hourly over the short-wave, dimming the nearer troubles of India and the fulminating Congress. Europe was in torment and Britain was fighting for all that was worth having.

The club, five thousand feet above the baked and sizzling

plains, with its veranda overhanging the water, its diving pier, dance pavilion and bar, and its red-canopied skiffs with their twinkling, heart-shaped paddles, plying from houseboat to houseboat, was full of British officers of the Indian Army on short leave, with their wives and families, unattached, downy-lipped younger ones, and parents with marriageable daughters from all over India. The resort is a favorite marriage market. We must have seen the budding of a dozen romances, and the little English church, set in its glorious flowers, saw as many army weddings.

Every day familiar faces vanished and new ones came to take their places. At the end of a fortnight the crowd would have entirely changed. They were of army stock, with fathers, husbands or brothers somewhere in the service, on the frontier or fighting in France. Some were soon to start overseas, others to go back to their posts in India. The British officers of the Indian Army run to type. They are an upstanding lot, keen and hard-muscled, a bit fatalistic, perhaps, for all have seen frontier service and there is always danger on the northwest frontier. They were restless now, for the war was gnawing at their hearts.

I shall not soon forget the evening, with the radio threading the dance music, when the dire news came over of the French request for an armistice. At the word "armistice" the dance music stopped. There was a moment of utter shocked silence, while the short message, packed with such portent, came across. The bar was a row of faces turned into the room, with hands holding drinks suspended in air, as though waiting for the conclusion of a toast.

The Indian servants in their red sashes and colored turbans stood outside the open windows, while the swish of paddles ceased as the passing skiffs beyond the veranda paused to listen. They knew what that news meant, but the beady black eyes, fixed on their masters, watching to see how the white *sahibs* took it, gave no sign. When the bodiless voice thousands of miles away ceased speaking, there was no babble of comment, no excited discussion. The row at the bar faced about, the glasses



were emptied and refilled, while the music took on again where it had left off.

A young captain, whose pal had been potted by a tribesman sniper the week before, came to our table with a tray of gimlets and we drank together. "Here's to next year," he said, "wherever we may be!" and swung my wife out to the floor. Whatever was to come, the British could take it.

But the lights burned late on the houseboats that night, and for nights afterward, as the news of Dunkirk filtered through.

## Chapter Twenty-five

### DEADLOCK AND DANGER

THE French armistice, however it shocked the rest of the non-Hitlerian world, exalted Gandhi. He accepted it as France's first step toward the adoption of a national policy of non-resistance. He came out with a broadside in the *Harijan* in praise of Pétain's "heroism." He thought the Marshal had shown "rare courage in bowing to the inevitable and refusing to be a party to a senseless mutual slaughter," and wanted the world "to know the great bravery of the French statesmen in suing for peace."

It made a fitting prelude to a clarion call which he issued to the British Government to follow their example. It was captioned, "I appeal to every Briton." He declared that he wanted Britain neither to be defeated nor to be victorious. "You will invite Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini," it said, "to take what they want of the countries you call your possessions. Let them take possession of your beautiful island, with your many beautiful buildings. You will give all these, but neither your soul nor your minds. If these gentlemen choose to occupy your homes, you will vacate them. If they do not give you free passage out, you will allow yourself, man, woman and child, to be slaughtered, but you will refuse to owe allegiance to them."

He added, "This is no appeal made by a man who does not know his business. Where my method had seemed sometimes to have failed, I ascribe it to my own imperfections." He sent the appeal to the Viceroy with a letter.

Lord Linlithgow was more courteous than Hitler had been. In due course he replied that the appeal had been conveyed to His Majesty's government, which, with every appreciation of Gandhi's motives, did not feel able to consider the policy he advocated. And presently, for all the world as if Ramgarh had never happened, the Viceroy proffered an elaboration of his old suggestion. He proposed to give seats in his Executive Council

to prominent political leaders, to set up the war advisory body containing representatives of both British India and the Native States, and to declare that "as soon as possible after the war" India should have dominion status. A conference representing the main elements of India's national life should be immediately convened to frame a constitution.

One must admire the sang-froid with which the Indian Government refused to be deflected from the task of finding some new formula for agreement. The impulse of compromise, the genius for meeting opposition halfway, which is the British Government's glory and its enemies' despair, has put it morally in the right in many a controversy. The British are like that. It is never too late to keep on trying.

For Gandhi the "as soon as possible" damned the offer, and he flatly rejected it. The Moslem League was not much better: it would collaborate, but only on terms that would have knocked the 1935 federation scheme into a cocked hat. It demanded that the Moslems be "guaranteed" against Hindu invasion of their rights. Gandhi was delighted. He called the proposal "a god-send for non-violence." Later he explained his position: "If we help the war effort we really come more under the British sway than we are today. And if in spite of our help they lose, we would come under the rule of another foreign power. So that if Britain and India were jointly defeated, we would be jumping from the frying pan into the fire." And in a speech to his Congress Committee he declared, "I do not think the Germans as a nation are any worse than the English, or the Italians are any worse."

Murmurs were rising now from both wings of the Congress. When Japan joined the Axis it had been too much even for the Communist group. Manabendra Roy, their leader, one-time associate of Trotsky and Lenin in Moscow and recognized authority on Marxism, had formed a National Democratic Union to rally the left-wingers for an all-out effort in the war. The volatile Bose, however, convinced that the Japanese move overshadowed the driving of the white man from Asia, in order

to be in at the start had fled to Berlin where he was now broadcasting against the British rule in India; and the young Extremists, who had trained with him, wanted Civil Disobedience at once, with teeth in it, and were chafing at the delay. The more moderate ones (notably Rajagopalachari, the Madras leader) saw the impasse opening and were alive to the war danger.

Gandhi had to sail a middle course. He invented what he called "individual Civil Disobedience." No mass movement was to be approved, but Civil Disobedience was to be permitted to certain individuals whom he would choose. This was to have a non-violent form, the propagation of anti-war views by means of public speeches.

On this issue Gandhi went to the mat with the Viceroy, but took the fall. Lord Linlithgow assured him that as many of his followers as chose might call themselves conscientious objectors. They would be treated exactly as people of that ilk were treated in England. There was no conscription, and no one in India outside of the military was under compulsion to fight. They might express their views in public or private. But when it came to advising soldiers to desert or munition workers to quit their shops, that was another thing.

Gandhi took the bull by the horns. He chose his men one by one, and they began their preaching against any participation in the war effort. The police were watchful. The agitators got no further than the first sentence. Nehru was one of those arrested.

He did not miss the opportunity which Gandhi had used in his address before the court at Allahabad in 1922. With the same grandiloquent blindness to the larger issues of orderly government he too pleaded guilty and spoke his familiar piece: "It is not I that you are seeking to judge and condemn," he said, "but rather the hundreds of millions of the people of India, and that is a large task even for a proud empire. Perhaps . . . it is the British Empire itself that is on trial before the bar of the world."

So have spoken all the long procession of anarchists and

nihilists, fascists and Benthamites, seceders, knights-errant and deluded martyrs of every mistaken cause!

The jails were soon filling with the rank and file, who before long were grumbling. Heretofore there had been pleasurable excitement with a certain amount of celebrity; now they simply dropped ingloriously out of sight, lucky if they even got their names in the papers. Some daring ones asked why Gandhi did not get himself arrested too.

He answered that he must be free "to cope with any contingency that may arise." God had chosen him as His instrument for showing the better way. Demands increased that he cancel the program. He would neither do that nor permit general mass action. Not even, he said, if Hitler invaded India. The movement was soon out of his control, and by the following July 1941, some twelve thousand agitators had been lodged quietly in jail.

Public opinion was by this time up in arms, and the Indian Government, seeing which way the wind was blowing, began a widespread release of prisoners. This was the situation when the Japanese—who were now ensconced in Indo-China and clearly planning a swoop through Thailand on Malaya—treacherously attacked Pearl Harbor in December 1941. By Christmas they were in Hong Kong. Three weeks later Singapore fell. In another fortnight their forces were in Java.

The Japanese advance was the signal for a near revolt in the Congress Committee. Led by Jawaharlal Nehru and Rajagopalachari, the majority, in the face of the whirlwind aggression, balked at Gandhi's non-violence. Without his permission they called off the campaign. It was only a flash in the pan, however. Most of them had been under the spell too long. He sat tight in his *ashram* at Wardha and waited till the flurry spent itself.

Presently the Japanese were driving into Burma, "On the Road to Mandalay." It was at this juncture that the Chinese Generalissimo, with Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, at Churchill's request, flew to Calcutta and had a conference with Gandhi and Nehru. To the hard-headed Chinese leader, facing a possible

overrunning of India, a policy of unarmed resistance was ridiculous. When Chiang demurred, Gandhi said, "God will give me proper guidance." Mahadev Desai, Gandhi's chief private secretary, through the *Harijan*, assured its readers that the Mahatma "left the Generalissimo in no doubt that Japan or Germany would be confronted with 'fierce' Non-Co-operation or civil resistance." Chiang's statement urged the British Government "as speedily as possible" to give the Indians "real political power."

Churchill's response, following cabled proposals from Sapru, the Liberal, was to take Sir Stafford Cripps, a personal friend of Nehru's, into the War Cabinet and to announce that a new plan was being formulated.

Cripps brought it to New Delhi in March.

In the previous July the Congress Committee had passed a resolution setting forth the party's policy. Great Britain was to declare India independent and to withdraw. India would then form a provisional government. This provisional government would hold a constituent assembly, which would frame a constitution. Under the constitution the new government would come into being and it would confer with Great Britain as to the war.

Yet how could British rule be withdrawn till there was a new government to take over? Were the Congress leaders—was even Gandhi—ingenuous enough to believe this possible? A revolution is an implement of force, and force is the authority under which the new government appears. But here was no force, only a vacuum. The British rule would have ceased to be and there would be no government at all. This could mean only chaos and an invitation to the Japanese.

They need not hurry, there would be plenty of time. Even if a constituent assembly could be called, it would require many months, and the framing of the constitution many more. Australia's federal constitution took four years to frame, lacking one month, and it had few complexities. Canada's took two years and a half, after the Constituent Convention met.

And what form was the constitution to take? Was there to be a Union India or Jinnah's *Pakistan*? The Congress did not say, nor did it know.

What of the multiple apparatus for the operation of a free State, the foreign corps, relations with the Native States and with other countries, including the United Nations—while the new government was taking shape, if it took shape at all? Afghanistan, a thorn in Great Britain's side, as in Russia's, for generations, and Nepal, the closed country of the fighting Gurkas, whom the Indian Army uses as mercenaries against the wild border tribes, have treaties with Great Britain, not with India. If the British moved out overnight, free India would have no treaties with them. The Afghans had attacked India in three wars already. What might not occur on that prickly selva with no troops on guard?

The Moplah rebellion had shown what could happen inside India's borders. It is not long ago that the notorious Pir Pagara, chief of the Hur Tribe in Sind Province, with his fanatical followers, set up a terrorist regime. British troops disposed of it and he was executed, but what if the government ceased suddenly to be, and the Indian Army automatically disbanded, leaving a handful of British troops strictly debarred from taking any part in internal disorders?

And during the period of no government in India, for defense or for anything else, what might not the Japanese be up to?

As to possible civil war, the bubbling Hindu-Moslem feud did not disturb Gandhi. Both sides, he said, were "preparing to fight the issue out, preparing silently and secretly," but he undertook to settle any civil war "in a fortnight." He would end the present state of things, he said, "even at the risk of anarchy reigning supreme in India." On the day Singapore fell, *Dawn*, the organ of Jinnah's League, had carried on its front page a blazing manifesto: "PAKISTAN! By God, we will have it!" Apropos of which Sir Chimanal Setalvad, the Liberal leader, warned, "Unless all India pulls together and makes a

tremendous war effort there is sure to be a 'Japanistan,' and following that the *kabrastan* [graveyard] of its hopes of independence."

The Congress plan was well described in one of Lahore's papers as like a movie film run in reverse, "where food is forked out of diners' mouths to their plates, and eventually carried backwards to the kitchen to be uncooked." Cripps' plan put the horse where it belonged, before the cart. Its logical order was: the constituent assembly, the constitution, the new government, the British retirement.

It went a long step further than any of the previous proposals. The British Government already stood pledged to accept any constitution framed by Indians for themselves as soon as the war was won, "provided no powerful and substantial segment of Indian opinion rejected it." Congress had charged that Britain kept this provision knowing the Moslems would never agree to any constitution. It wanted the constituent assembly and a constitution that was bound to be accepted. The Cripps offer swept away this hurdle.

India was to have its constituent assembly, elected by all members of the lower houses of the provincial Legislatures, and the Native States, or by any other agreed method. This left both the machinery to frame the constitution, and the constitution itself, to the Indians. They could make it a federation or a group of autonomous States. If the Assembly could agree on a constitution, Britain would accept it, whether it chose dominion status or complete independence. If some provinces or Native States did not agree to the constitution, they could stand out and Britain would recognize their separate independence. A treaty between the British Government and the new government of India would cover all details of the transfer of power and responsibility, and protect Britain's existing undertakings for the protection of the minorities. This was the same freedom as England or the dominions possess, either as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, or outside of it.

In other words the Indian Union was absolutely free to stay



in or go out of the commonwealth. If it chose to remain in, it could leave it when it so desired. It could make treaties with any other nations of the world. It could join any foreign country—just as Canada can join the United States if it wishes to and if the United States will take it in. Great Britain would have no power in India except as provided in the treaty. No British troops would remain unless at its request. It could take any internal or financial measures open to any other sovereign State. It could participate in the Atlantic Charter. The take-over would occur as soon as the new constitution was framed to replace the present one. This would be at the earliest possible moment after the war was over.

For the war must go on. Its necessities required all the thought and energies of both countries. The present constitution furnished the only responsible government there was. How could Britain give over the whole machinery of defense to an irresponsible body which had yet to decide whether a constitution could be agreed to? That meant an interim. During that time the British Government must control the defense of India, but the organization of the country for the war must be the responsibility of the Indian Government. For that period Indian political parties were invited to nominate representatives to the Viceroy's Executive Council. India would be represented at the peace conference.

The concession in the plan was so complete that it ran the gauntlet of sharp criticism in England. "It signed away the title deeds of the old British Raj," said the die-hards. And that was in fact what it did. It received a distinguished welcome from forward-looking Indian patriots who had watched the Congress' demoralization with pain and hopeless rage.

One telegram Sir Stafford received, saluting it as the solvent of India's chaos, was from the famous Aurobindo Ghose, a name revered by all Indians.

Forty years ago, in the days of old Tilak and his fire-eating following, Ghose was the recognized leader of the terrorists of Bengal, who were responsible for the reign of riot and assassina-

tion that so long disturbed that province. At that time the young Tagore wrote his first *Songs of Freedom*. Indian officials resigned their posts and mobs burned British stuffs in bonfires in the streets. And Ghose failed just as Gandhi failed at Bombay, and for the same reason. Armed rebellion followed the seizure of the leadership by the radicals, and the revolt was bloodily stamped out.

But Ghose, like Tagore, after World War I, seeing Great Britain's efforts toward a real representative government in India, had counted the battle won. He had forsworn his terrorism and retired to an *ashram* in southern India, near Madras, where he gave his time to philosophy and authorship. His recent *The Life Divine* is considered by native scholars among the noblest products of Indian thought. It has now been recommended for the Nobel Prize. His attitude today is that of his brother, Barendra Kumai Ghose, who has declared, "I had been instrumental in plunging my country in this morass of blood and intrigue. Now I would give every drop in me to make Young India retrace her steps. . . . This way does not lie her salvation. If England conquered India, she gave her a new outlook, a rebirth out of six centuries of creeping apathy and death."

Gandhi, however, wanted no new plan from Great Britain. From the first announcement of Cripps' coming he had kept up a continuous appeasement barrage. On the day of Sir Stafford's arrival he said in the *Harijan*, "Can we feel a glow of bravery and sacrifice at the prospect of Indian earth being 'scorched' and everything destroyed in order that the enemy's march may be hampered? I see no bravery in destroying life or property for offense or defense. I would far rather leave crops and homestead for the enemy than destroy them to prevent their use by him."

As for the *bona fides* of the war, his constant text was "A plague on both your houses!" He saw "no difference between the Fascist and Nazi Powers and the Allies." All were exploiters. All "resorted to ruthlessness to compass their end." Rajagopalachari, that most brilliant and far-visioned of all the southern leaders, opposed this course. He condemned Gandhi's policy

as futile and dangerous. It consisted merely of "pointing out the faults of the British, plus war neutrality against Axis aggression." Even an unarmed national army would be better! He was for arming the people for resistance.

Gandhi saw Cripps, who had been in India three years before and had discussed the situation then with him, only once. Cripps's conferences, however, were frank and open. The Viceroy stood aside while he conferred with provincial governors and prime ministers, members of the Executive Council and chiefs of the various parties. He saw Nehru and Jinnah, Sapru, Jayakar, Joshi the labor mouthpiece, Abul Kalam Azad the Moslem president of the Congress, the chancellor and pro-chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, spokesmen of the Hindu *Mahasabha*, Ambedkar the leader of the Untouchables, representatives of the Sikhs and the British community, and newspapermen.

While the conversations were proceeding, Gandhi, at his *ashram*, had the correspondents on his doorstep. He told the *London Express* that the Chinese had made the mistake of resisting the Japanese. If they had not done so, but had merely used Non-Co-operation, the Japanese would have been defeated. He made the curious observation that "it is not human to go on killing where there is no resistance. . . . Give me control in India and I will meet the Japanese, though not with fighting. I would let them land. Then, by Non-Co-operation, even though they kill my people, I would stop their possessing India."

This preaching had its effect on the masses, to whom Gandhi is a super-saint and miracle man. The British losses of Hong Kong and Singapore had made the Congress upper crust contemptuous of British arms and quite ready for a defeatist program. If the United Nations won the war, they argued, independence was certain. In case they lost, the Congress, if it did not identify itself with the victor's enemies, would be better able to collaborate with them to save what was possible from the wreck.

On the day Gandhi's *London Express* interview appeared

Colonel Louis Johnson arrived at Delhi, heading an American economic mission, in the quality of personal representative of the President. Though his mission was purely economic, he conferred with Indian leaders, among them Nehru, who dreamed of an American arbitration and whose obsession was that the President might be brought to put pressure on the British Government. There were disturbing rumors that the Colonel and the Viceroy did not see eye to eye. The telegrams clicked between New Delhi, London and Washington. In the end a cablegram to Washington from Harry Hopkins, who was in conference with Churchill in London, is believed to have closed the incident, whatever it was.

The Cripps proposal was not finding altogether easy sledding in New Delhi. The Congress body denounced the non-accession clause as an open door to separatism, as did the Sikhs. The *Mahasabha* shouted that "India must be indivisible." Ambedkar registered his old demand that the Untouchables be made a separate community, to insure them protection against the Hindu caste domination. The princes insisted that States which did not wish to join the Union should have the right to form a separate sovereign union of their own, which would make possible a dominion consisting solely of Native States. The Congress demanded that the princes be compelled to democratize their States with popular elections to the Constituent Assembly, which would require Great Britain to tear up all its treaties with them.

But how could it either legally or morally transfer to a free India the powers and limited jurisdiction granted to it by the Native States in those treaties? They are sovereign States themselves. And if a free India annexed them without their consent, Great Britain would be compelled to resist the act as an aggression. The refusal to take into account Britain's responsibility to the States is one of the Congress' most glaring inconsistencies.

Yet the Moslem League, on the whole, favored the plan. The labor groups, in the person of Joshi, with certain reserva-

tions, would come in. And there was a substantial minority of the Congress Committee for acceptance. Prasad and Rajagopalachari were for a "settlement," Azad for a compromise. Nehru was all but won. On the whole the prospect looked rosy.

But on the last night of the conversations, after the Congress Committee had passed a resolution accepting the proposals, Gandhi put in his oar. In the name of the Congress he demanded a wholly Indian cabinet, with the immediate and unqualified transfer of all power to it.

This was meant to wreck the agreement, for Gandhi was well aware that Britain could not accept the demand, and that if it did the Moslems would instantly repudiate it. Rajagopalachari had written him that the withdrawal of the British Government without simultaneous replacement by another "must involve the dissolution of society itself. . . . It is certain that the party to gain immediately . . . will be Japan."

The ultimatum did not fail of its purpose. At the voice of the master the Committee came to heel—all but Rajagopalachari. Nehru, who has always said that only a great crisis would make England yield, though he knew that Gandhi by no means voiced the unanimous demand of the Indian people as was his claim, toed the mark with the rest. He made a speech, in his fieriest vein, condemning acceptance. The Committee reversed its decision and flatly and finally rejected the Cripps proposals.

Two days later Sir Stafford sailed for London, with his mission a dead failure and the proposals in the wastebasket. The British Government withdrew its offer.

This marked the obsequies of the good press the Nationalist cause had had so long in America, and on which Gandhi cannily set great store: the good British press had faded with the collapse of the Round Table Conference. The Congress has made desperate efforts to lay the onus of the breakdown on the British government. Abul Kalam Azad has said that on the question of national defense he and Cripps had "practically agreed on a formula," when the India Office intervened. But the Secretary of State for India has denied that Cripps was overruled "in

any point" from London. And Cripps himself, in the Commons, has bluntly declared that the collapse of the conversations "took place on the intervention of Gandhi."

Gandhi publicly labeled the plan "naked imperialism." He found "nothing at all good in it" and was "discouraged that a friend of Nehru's should have made himself the bearer of the mission." He called it sourly "a postdated check on a bank that was obviously crashing," instead of the undated promissory notes previously given. Nehru called it "an insult to India."

Throughout Gandhi's career, behind the significant and sensational moves to which he ascribes a spiritual motive, one sees lurking the shifty shadow of political exigency. It comes clearly into the foreground at this last fork of the long road, where he took the wrong turning.

He believed that, as things stood, the British could not defend India with their own military strength, and that the Allies must lose to the Axis. The Japanese occupied the Andaman Islands. There had been an air raid on Colombo and bombings on the east coast of the mainland. Japanese raiders were busy in the Bay of Bengal. But by some extraordinary chain of reasoning he had convinced himself that "if Britain left India to itself, probably the Japanese would also leave India alone," and that if they did not, through his panacea Non-Co-operation, India would emerge victorious in that spiritual conflict. "They would find," as he said, "they will have to hold more than they can in their iron hoof."

If, on the other hand, with India's all-out help Great Britain won the war, the victory would make her doubly strong—strong enough to defy the Congress, and him. To yield now, in face of a probable Axis victory, would be not only to abandon his Non-Co-operation weapon, but to abdicate his throne, to put forever behind him his burning ambition to "settle the destiny of India" and to "bring England to her knees."

It was the Politician's choice: he chose to sabotage India's resistance to the Japanese aggressor, in order to maintain his title of single-handed conqueror of the British Empire.

Roy's National Democratic Union revolted. The Radical Democrats in a resolution declared, "The party is happy to know that British public opinion is beginning to realize that the Congress is not India and does not represent anything more than a vocal group of politicians who have been dominating the situation because of their control of the press and the undue importance attached to them by the British Government. The central government should be immediately reconstructed along the lines of Cripps' offer." In half the towns of India Hirohito was being burned in effigy in the streets.

But Gandhi carried on. Following his familiar tactics of muffling argument on a larger issue by placarding a lesser one, he opened an attack on America's motives. There was no longer need to nurse the transatlantic press: America was in the war, too, up to the hilt. The Congress Party newspapers, which not so long ago had been appealing to a just and noble America for an arbitration, delivered broadsides against American ignorance and hypocrisy. These attacks up to this date of writing have not ceased. They are only put a little more politely by Indian Nationalist speakers and writers now enjoying American hospitality.

In India the text was the presence in the country of United States troops. Gandhi protested bitterly. "We know what American aid means," the *Harijan* stormed. "It amounts in the end to American influence, if not to American rule added to the British." Later Gandhi said, "America could have remained out. Even now it can do so if it divests itself of the intoxication its immense wealth has produced. . . . If it had really wished to do so it could have brought about peace. But . . . it did not use that opportunity."

His attacks on the Indian Government gained added venom. The presence of the British, he insisted, was the only incentive for the Japanese to attack India. If they withdrew, the Japanese "would be bound to reconsider their plans." He demanded the razing of India's munition factories. "I have not asked the British to hand over India to the Congress or to the Hindus,"

he protested. "Let them entrust India to God, or in modern parlance to anarchy. Then all parties will fight one another like dogs, or will, when real responsibility faces them, come to a reasonable agreement."

Any doubt that may have lingered as to the Congress' attitude and intentions disappeared shortly after Cripps's departure, when the police descended on Happiness House, the splendid old mansion in Allahabad, now the Congress Party's headquarters. A secret meeting of the Committee had been held there with Nehru presiding, and its minutes were seized. They included a draft-resolution, written in Gandhi's hand, that had been forwarded from the *ashram* at Wardha. The Indian Government was unkind enough to publish this, together with significant excerpts from the minutes of the meeting. Rajagopalachari had refused to follow the rest. He favored an entente with the Moslem League on the basis of Jinnah's *Pakistan*, and the organization of a coalition armed defense. Having a mind of his own, he was no longer of use to the dictator. The Committee had given the quietus to his plan and his resignation had been forced.

The record was pitilessly plain: "If India were freed its first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan." The Committee "desires to assure the Japanese Government and people that India bears no enmity toward Japan. . . . The Committee is of opinion that the British are incapable of defending India." If Japan invaded there was to be "no resistance of 'scorched earth.'" Nehru had reminded the Committee that "it is Gandhi's feeling that Japan and Germany will win." The cat and all the kittens were out of the bag.

Gandhi did not take the raid kindly. He called the government's seizure of the documents "reprehensible and illegitimate," but did not deny their authenticity. He still saw himself as a global evangel of peace. "If India became an independent nation tomorrow, I would certainly plead with the provisional government to send me, old as I am, to Japan, and I would plead with her, as the first instance, to free China from the menace Japan has become."



Presently another sensational statement issued from the Wardha *ashram*. The vernacular press of India shrieked it in seven-column headlines: "BRITISH MUST Go! Gandhi Announces That the British Must Withdraw Their Troops. Mass Civil Disobedience to Follow Refusal!" It was the last turn of the screw.

What Gandhi now planned was to be the widest Passive-Resistance movement of his career. He played safe. His demand was "unconditional withdrawal, *without reference to the wishes of the parties or the people as a whole.*" This was because he knew neither the Moslem League, nor the Sikhs, nor the other smaller parties, would vote for it. Nor could he be sure of a popular plebiscite, if such a thing were remotely possible. The Congress Party was the only thing he could bank on and there were a few irreconcilables even there who resented his cashiering of Rajagopalachari. For popular consumption he added a religious sanction: the demand, he said, "was born in me in my Day of Silence. I am burdening my thoughts with the world's sorrow."

Later he outlined his program. First the peasants would cease to pay taxes. They would manufacture salt. They would then seize the land without compensation. There might be fifteen days of chaos, but "we shall soon bring it under control." Then the workmen would quit the factories. The railroads would cease running. The princes had their own armies and they might make trouble. But everything would soon right itself.

As for the provisional government, that would be easy. He would give each of the seven hundred thousand villages in India a single vote. They would elect the district administrations, these in turn would elect the provincial ones, and the last would elect the country's president. Just how **this stupendous franchise** is to be implemented does not appear. His central government simply materializes, like the rabbit from the magician's hat, and it "will act according to the people's will."

He evidently felt, however, that he had gone too far in his sweeping demand, for he almost immediately qualified it by announcing that, if the Allies counted it necessary to prevent a

Japanese occupation, he would consent to the troops' remaining, and to their use of India as a base for military operations. But the Indian people must be set free meanwhile. And any troops that remained should exercise no authority over the people. They should be there for the sole purpose of repelling a Japanese attack and helping China. And at their own expense—India was not to pay "a single penny" of the cost.

Yet can he have seriously believed that Great Britain could in honor consider the leaving of an armed force, not to speak of a civil administration, in a country for whose good it was no longer responsible? The Aga Khan had long ago declared, for the Moslems: "If the British government, in a fit of madness of which there has been no parallel in history, supplied armed force to a country wherein its responsibility had come to an end, to be administered at the beck and call of other people, it would go down not only in the estimation of the whole world, but in history for all time!"

Gandhi's next step, in the manner of his earlier call "to every Briton," was an open appeal "to every Japanese," published in the *Harijan*. "I fear," he told them, "that without declaring the independence of India the Allied Powers will not beat the Axis. . . . I appeal to you in the hope that our movement may even influence you and your partners in the right direction, and deflect you and them from the course which is bound to end in your moral ruin. . . . How I wish that you are cruelly misrepresented and that I shall touch the right chord in your heart!"

The end came quickly after that. The Committee, in full session, "for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence," endorsed and sanctioned "the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale, so that the country may utilize all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last twenty-two years of peaceful struggle." Such a struggle, it declared, "must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhi, and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken."

The government had full knowledge of what these steps were

to be. They were, first, the cutting of telegraph and telephone lines, the destruction of railways and the disruption of all public utility services; second, the organization of strikes not only in labor and industry, but in law courts, schools and colleges; third, the wreckage of defense measures, including recruitment for the army, the output of munitions, and the sabotage of air-dromes and air-raid shelters; fourth, tampering with the loyalty of the troops and government servants. The plans were a complete blueprint of a full-fledged revolution, the product of a conspiracy such as was bared after the Amritsar affair, but more completely worked out and more dangerous. From the phrasing of the Committee's resolution it was to be a struggle beside which the bloody campaigns of the past two decades might be called "peaceful"!

The action of the Committee was enough for the government. The following day Gandhi, with the main Congress leaders, was put under arrest. In the polite British parlance, "detained." For the British consider him not a criminal in the ordinary sense of the word, but a mistaken zealot whom it is necessary to restrain in the interest of the public order. And they have a proper consideration for his age and the reverence in which the non-political masses of India hold him. He is not languishing in a cell, but is quartered in the palatial Indian home of the Aga Khan, at Poona, near Bombay, incommunicado, but lapped in comfort. He could have luxuries if the word had any meaning to him. There he broods, his all-powerful weapon of the fast fallen useless from his hand, lost in his vague dream of an Indian "Peace Ship," of a spiritual "too proud to fight" become the Excelsior of a pacifist world.

His sequestration was the signal for the beginning of the threatened era of Civil Disobedience. It began the next day, with the murder of two Canadian officers of the Royal Air Force who were dragged from a train by a mob and beaten to death, and continued through a long series of train wrecks, arson and assassination. In the five months following his arrest nine hundred and forty persons were killed.

The disorders, the Secretary of State for India told the Commons, for a while "seriously interrupted communications in what was strategically the most vital area in India," and were intended to paralyze not only the ordinary administration of the country but its whole war effort. The success of the movement would have meant not only the enslavement of India herself to the Japanese, but the betrayal of Russia and China and the possible loss of the Allied cause.

Gandhi disavows all responsibility for the disorders. He holds them the expression of popular indignation at his unjust arrest. And the Congress Party and its adherents contend that the outbreaks were no part of their policy or program.

But printed leaflets of the Congress organizations giving specific instructions as to places and methods of mob attack and sabotage have been found in circulation in almost every part of India. Congress Party members have been repeatedly found acting as spearheads of the riots and subversive attempts. And the thousands of convictions tell their own story. The estimate of Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, India's representative in the British War Cabinet, is probably not an exaggerated one when he says that ninety-five per cent of Gandhi's Nationalist followers protest their allegiance to his non-violent principle with their tongues in their cheeks. They do not accept it and have no intention of practicing it.

Recently when a mob poured oil over two policemen, within a few miles of Gandhi's Wardha *ashram*, and made human torches of them, an Indian minister of the Punjab government at a public meeting demanded, "Can anyone tell me if the burning of persons alive is non-violent?" And Sir Firoz Khan Noon, Defense Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, speaking at the Aligarh Moslem University, said, "When the detailed history of this wanton destruction is written, Congress Party men must hang their heads in shame. Their supporters are appealing to His Majesty's government to make peace with their party, with their hands still warm and bloody, and with murder and arson written on their faces!"

## AVANT-COUREUR

Much has happened since I sat on Bombay's Malabar Hill, watching the vultures slanting over the Parsee Towers of Silence, and hoping I might stay on in India long enough to see the dénouement which had cast its shadow before at the Ramgarh Congress. Hirohito's imperial plans conflicted with mine and I saw it from this side of the Pacific. I had hardly landed in California when the extras were crying the treacherous assault on Pearl Harbor.

The orgy of violence following Gandhi's arrest last summer was a fitting colophon for the story of the All-India National Congress. It has been especially remarkable for one thing: he has issued no word of condemnation of the disorders.

His February fast at the Aga Kahn's palace, number nine of the long series, undertaken, after six months of detention, "with the clearest possible conscience," was neither penitential nor expiatory. It was a protest against the government's "leonine violence" and a demand for instant and unconditional release. It was frankly coercive. Not so long ago a group of his followers in jail adopted his method and went on a hunger strike. He reproved them sternly, saying, "No person shall free himself from prison by refusing to take food." But he is a law unto himself.

He is not willing, as a condition of his release, to call on the people to abandon the present movement. It is clear that he wishes it to continue, however shocking the results. But the Indian Government has learned its lesson. It has finally ceased to try to appease the unappeasable. Lacking an assurance that he will not direct or assist the campaign of violent subversive activity the Congress Party stands for, he will presumably remain the government's guest, at least for the duration.

The Mahatma is in his seventy-fifth year, and though he has a resilience and tenacity of will that belies his wispy physique, there is the saying of the pitcher that goes often to the well, and unless he determines on self-immolation as a last gesture to seal

a self-inflicted martyrdom, it seems likely that he will hesitate to undertake another such an ordeal.

The publicity given in America to the strange spectacle of the Poona fast was educational. It rehearsed the long struggle in reverse, and thoughtful American opinion has been materially influenced thereby. Our deep concern over the Indian situation and its bearing on the war remains. It inspired the sending to New Delhi in January last of William Phillips, one-time Ambassador and Under-Secretary of State, which for a time fanned the dimming blaze of Nationalist hopes. On the eve of his departure for home he informed the press that he had requested the Indian Government to permit him to interview the incommunicado Gandhi and Nehru (which was somewhat as if a Special American Envoy to London in 1916 had asked to interview Sir Roger Casement in the Tower) but that it had been denied him. The excitement, the speculation, the rumors and wry conclusions that must have followed the announcement of such a conference, if it had been granted, can well be imagined!

The All-India Congress is not all India. India's hundred million Moslems with a single voice say so. They have no sympathy with the policies either of the Congress or of its dictator. They recognize Gandhi's fast as "an act of violence" and decline to countenance any demand for his release from his gilt-edged confinement at Poona. And the Congress membership has dwindled rather than increased during his recent campaigns. Seven years ago it had four and a half millions: two years ago it had only one and a half millions.

Beyond much doubt, so far as the present war is concerned, the Congress Party has put itself beyond further consideration. The strange mass hypnotism to which it has yielded, one may now be confident, has about run its course, and the era of madness, that has played such havoc with India's government and public, will before many years be only another of the haggard furores which have distracted other peoples, to vanish with returning normalcy—Holland's tulip craze, France's South Sea

Bubble, England's witch-hunting frenzy, our own Free Silver lunacy, and all the rest.

The party's assumption that it is the sole and inevitable heir to India's government, and its intention (made so obvious during the rule of the Congress provincial ministries) to substitute its party machine and its dictator for the machine of democratic government, is an arrogant perversion of freedom. Its goal is the establishment of a party State, such as the world sees now in Russia, Italy and Germany. By exactly the methods Gandhi has used, came into being the Soviet of Lenin's Moscow, the Fascismo of Mussolini's Rome, and Hitler's monstrous abortion of Nazism in Berlin.

And the new Indian party State would be pledged to neutrality and non-resistance in the present war, to destruction of all India's vital war industries, to appeasement of Japan, and to a negotiated peace. This is what Gandhi and the Nationalist Congress would give to the Indian people!

The Mahatma's "Inner Voice," he has always assured his followers, directs these hunger strikes of his. Has heaven an eye for earthly political exigency? For one discerns a singular political timeliness about these essays in moral coercion, which Linlithgow calls by the blunt Anglo-Saxon term "blackmail." During the past twenty-five years each has coincided with a crisis in the Congress Party which threatened Gandhi's leadership, and has enabled him to establish his prestige and authority. The fast of last February, when he had made his final move and it had not availed—with the Nationalist plans gone awry and the revolution again sidetracked—coincided with the meeting of the Assembly, an ideal time, as it proved, to invoke the pressure of publicity. When he began it he wrote the harassed Viceroy, "You have left me no possible loophole to escape from the ordeal I have set before myself." Lord Linlithgow might reasonably have asked, "Why set it?" He no doubt saw no loophole of escape either. With him grave issues were at stake, greater than India, greater than all Asia, as wide as the world.

Meanwhile it is to be hoped the democracies, to whom India's

stability means so much in the present hazards of war, are justified in counting the worst over. Throughout the long turmoil labor in India has remained remarkably steady, war industries have been little affected, and strikes have been fewer than before the global struggle began. Hundreds of thousands of textile and other laborers refused to join in the walkouts following the arrest of the Congress leaders.

India's war effort is growing steadily. When the war began the volunteer Indian Army numbered only a hundred and seventy thousand men. Today it numbers a million and a half, and is growing at the rate of seventy thousand every month. The princes have given their own state forces and a hundred thousand recruits. The personnel of the Royal Indian Navy is ten times as large as at the outbreak of the war. Its ships have played a part in the Atlantic, in the East African waters and the Dutch East Indies, in the defense of Singapore and Burma. India's air force is sharing in the protection of its nearly four-thousand-mile coast line. Its ordnance factories have increased their output many times, in rifles, machine guns and ammunition of all grades. Its shipbuilding yards are working to capacity.

During the past two decades the kindly, gentle, saintlike character of the *ashram*, which has led millions of India's peasants to revere Gandhi as almost divine, has faded more and more dim, and the shrewd and ruthless personality of the arrant politician has overlaid it. The special and successful pleader for the righting of historic wrongs done his race, and the correction of abuses that were fruit of a vanished era, has become the self-appointed nemesis of an empire and the mystic giver of peace to the nations.

With his sweeping denial of the realities and trends of the present, Gandhi belongs to the Middle Ages. With his insistence on spiritual ideals that all human experience warns are in this century as unattainable as the furthest fixed star, perhaps he belongs to a golden age in the future far beyond our ken. To the Indian masses it is only the saint side that counts. Saintship has all privileges and needs no explanation. And while to the



West a paradoxical combination of Peter the Hermit and Guy Fawkes must remain a puzzle, in that time there will beyond question be a niche in India's long gallery for the statue of the little Mahatma with his pebble glasses and his loincloth.

In the new era which will follow the victory of the Allies no power on earth can stand between India and her freedom but herself. "To that aim," said the Secretary of State for India in Commons only a few short months ago, "to see India's destiny directed by Indian hands free of external control, we in this country have solemnly pledged ourselves before India and before the world. In the name of His Majesty's government I repeat that pledge today." Nowhere, not even in India, can reasonable doubt persist today of British sincerity. Since the Round Table Conference the West has understood that there is no impasse between Great Britain and India. The impasse is between Great Britain and the Congress. And more fundamentally between the Indians themselves.

The history of India's climb toward free self-government will one day be one of the world's great stories, which the Hindus themselves will rank with the legendary epic of their race's ancestral Sun and Moon Dynasties. It must not have the tragic ending that a Nazi or a Japanese invasion would portend!

In the long reach, the fires of national hatred kindled by the errors and misunderstandings of a less scrupulous era, whose ideals and rules of human conduct were not those of our today, will sink in the ashes and only the labors of the great Britain of today will be remembered. These have been toward a real unity and nationality of the Indian people, a constitution acceptable to all its principal factions and communities, and a national government springing from it which shall be symbol not of estrangement but of the linking of the East and West in the world society of the future.

India does not lack far-seeing leaders who should play a valiant part in the reconstruction of the new India, when the hour comes. They have been curbed and muzzled and browbeaten, but when the uproar is stilled the voices of its Saprus

and Sastris, its Rajagopalacharis, its Joshis and Jayakars, its Roys and Ambedkars, will be heard.

There will be the greater need then of Malaviya, India's Grand Old Man, with his learning and eloquence, his reverence for Old India and his incorruptible love of truth and justice. There will be need of Aurobindo Ghose, once the Bengal terrorist and now an uplifted voice for true and secure progress. There will be need of Jawaharlal Nehru, with his passion and persuasion, his silver voice, and his hold on the youth of India.

When the new lamps shall have replaced the old!









Post Wheeler holds doctorate degrees from Princeton, Temple and Andhra universities. He was the first to pass diplomatic service entrance examinations under the system inaugurated by President Theodore Roosevelt. Wheeler has represented the American government during several internationally critical periods. He was in Russia during the troubles of 1911, in Berlin at the outbreak of the first World War, in Japan during the same conflict, and in Paraguay during the Chaco War. He has received many decorations from foreign governments.

Mr. Wheeler lived in India for a number of years and his personal acquaintance with the principal leaders of the country's political factions has given him a unique opportunity for sane and dispassionate observation. He is an Honorary Fellow and Doctor of Andhra University in India.

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